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PARENTAL ADVISORY
EXPLICIT
CONTENT

GOLGO 13™

THE ORBITAL HIT

04

CREATED BY TAKAO SAITO

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Volume 04: THE ORBITAL HIT

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CREATED BY TAKAO SAITO

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PARENTAL ADVISORY
GOLGO 13 is rated M and is recommended for mature readers.
It contains violence and sexual themes.

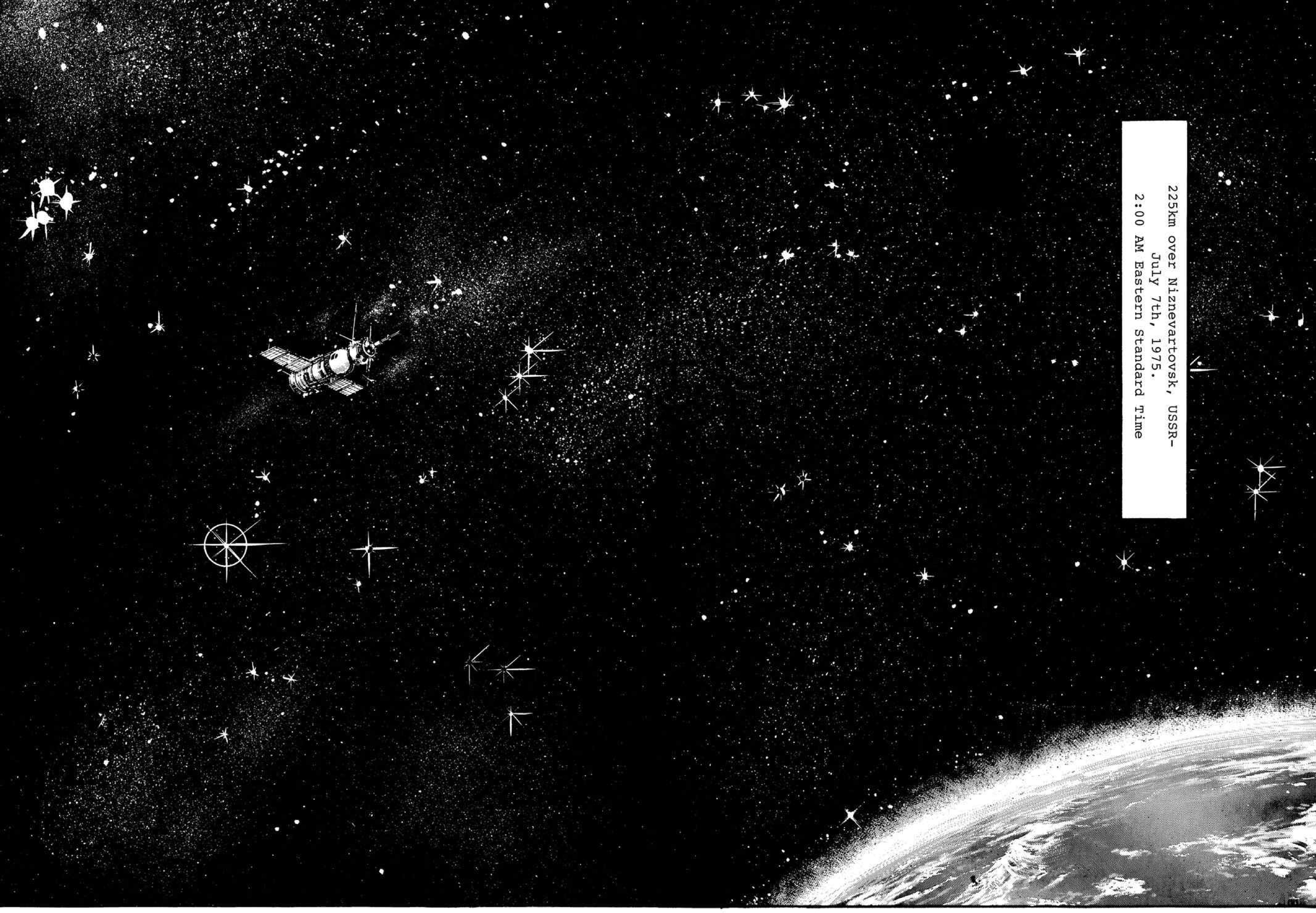
CONTENTS:

PAGE 3
THE ORBITAL HIT

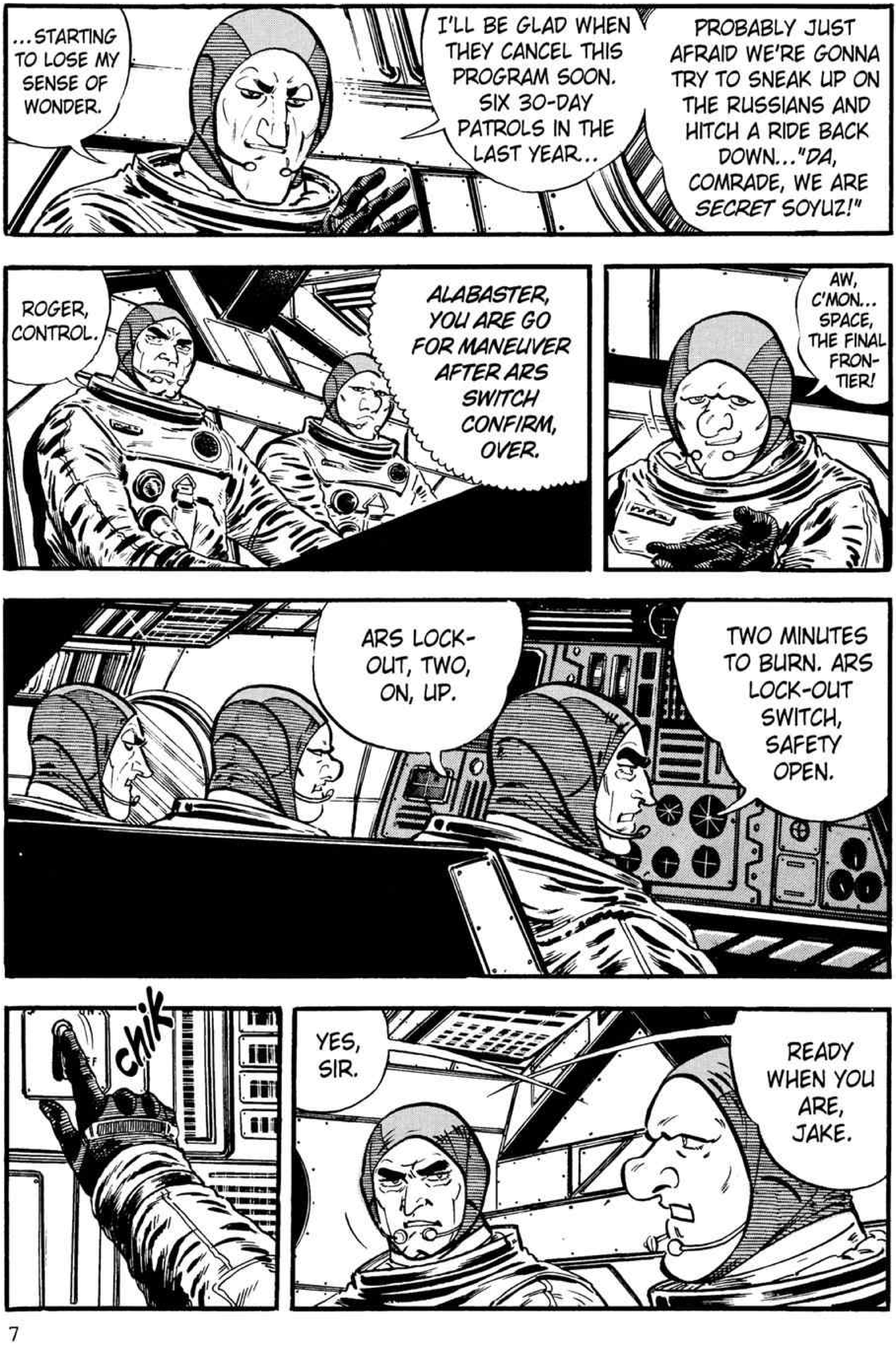
PAGE 130
ENGLISH ROSE

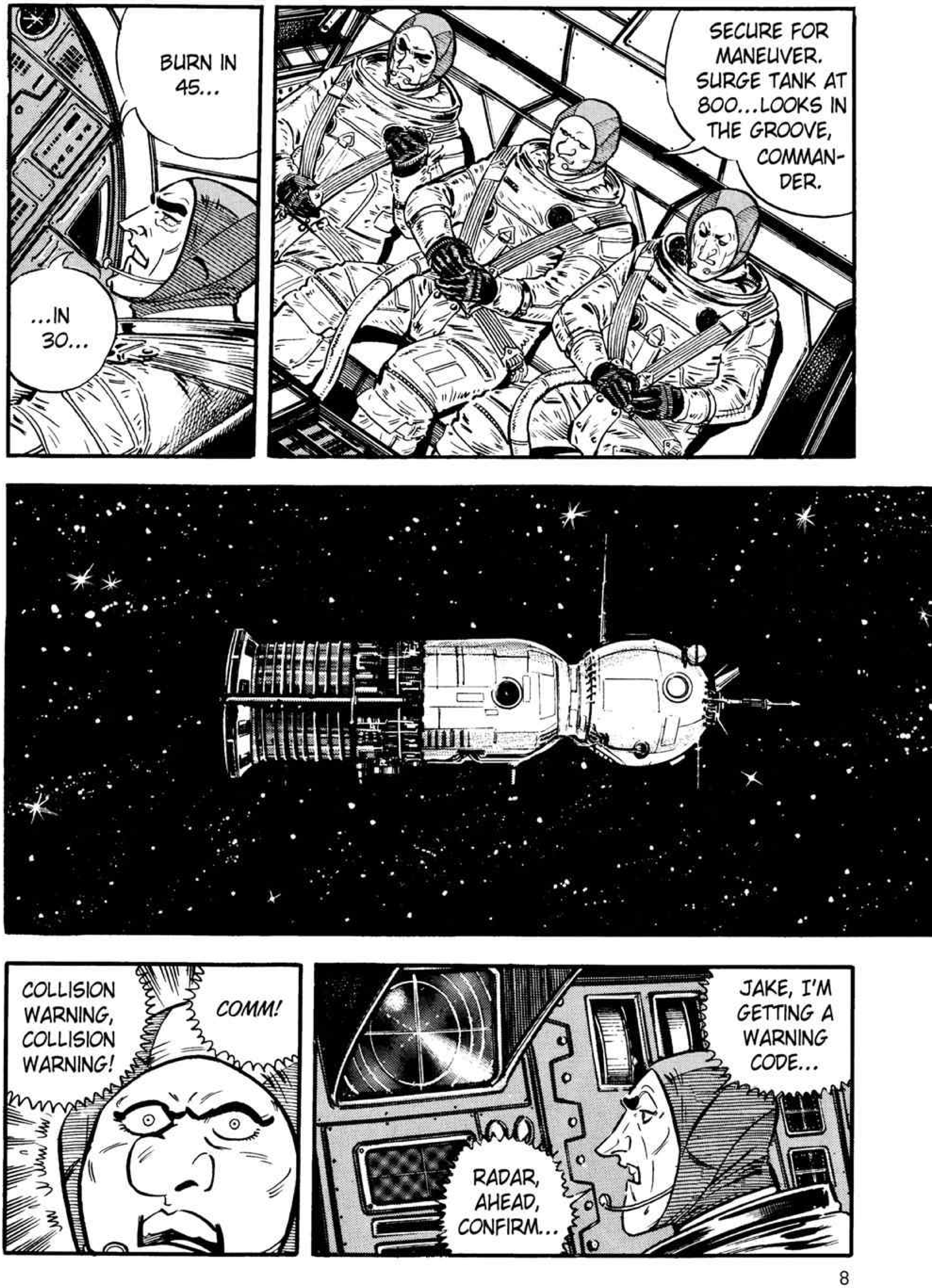
PAGE 211
FILE 13: ARMS AND WEAPONS SYSTEMS CATALOG, CHARACTERISTICS OF A SNIPER, THE MIND OF THE TARGET

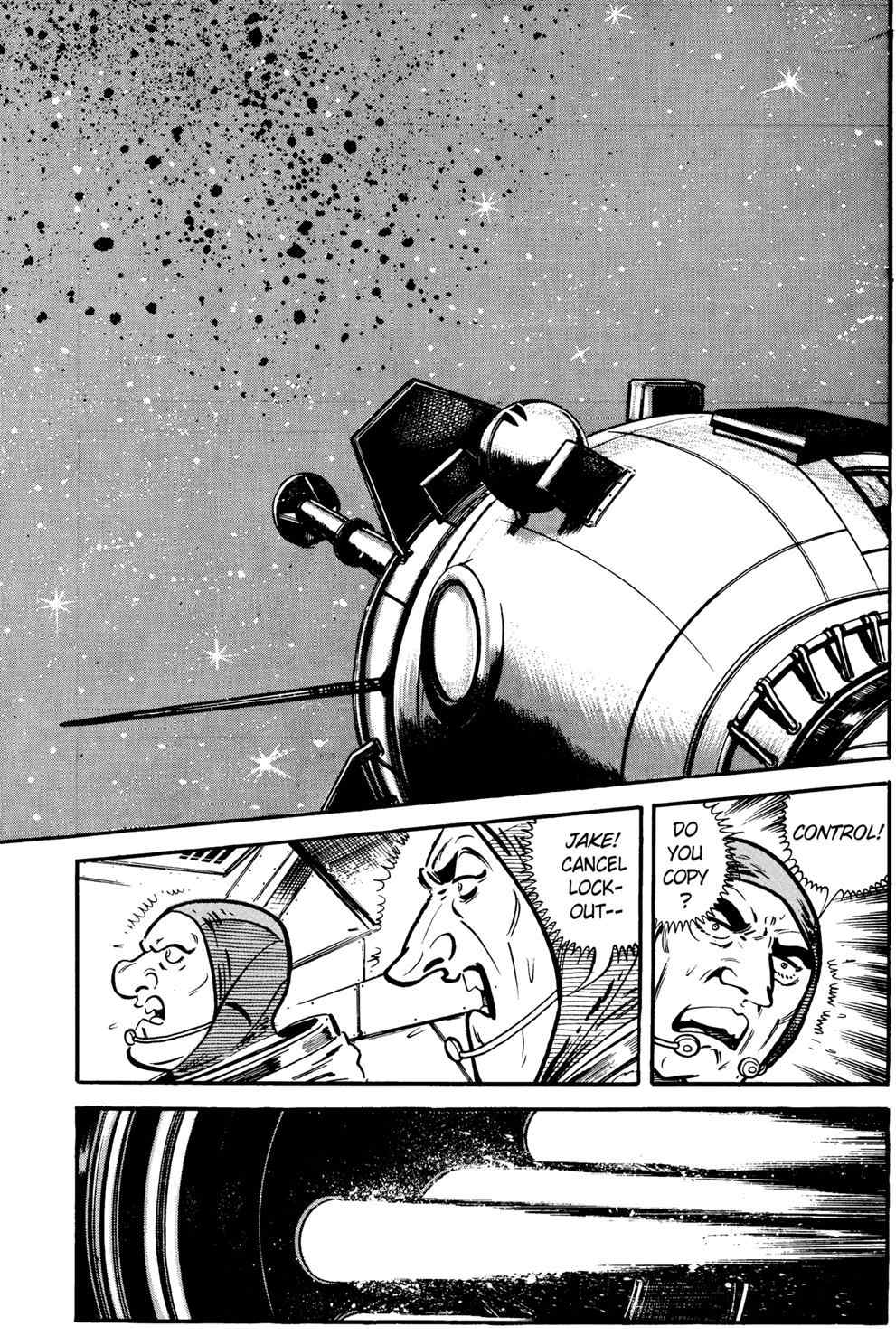
ゴルゴ13

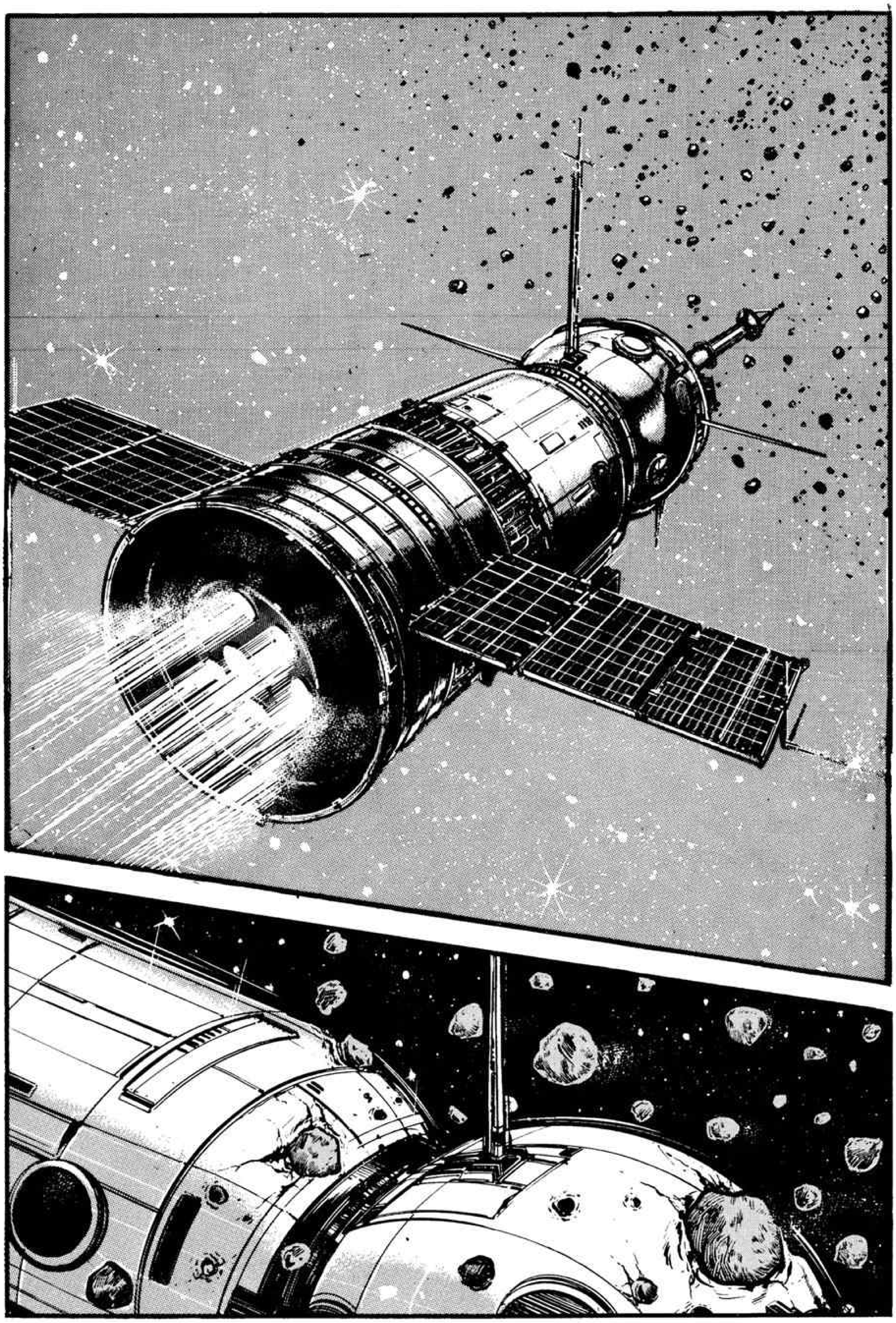

225km over Niznevartovsk, USSR-
July 7th, 1975.
2:00 AM Eastern Standard Time

CONTROL TO ALABASTER. OPAL HAS COMPLETED CORRECTION BURN, OVER.
THIS IS ALABASTER.
STANDING BY FOR MANEUVER START, OVER.
GETTING ANALOMOUS BEHAVIOR ON THE NUMBER ONE H2 TANK... CRYO WARNING LIGHT KEEPS COMING ON...
...KEEPS SETTING OFF THE MASTER ALARM...
ROGER THAT...

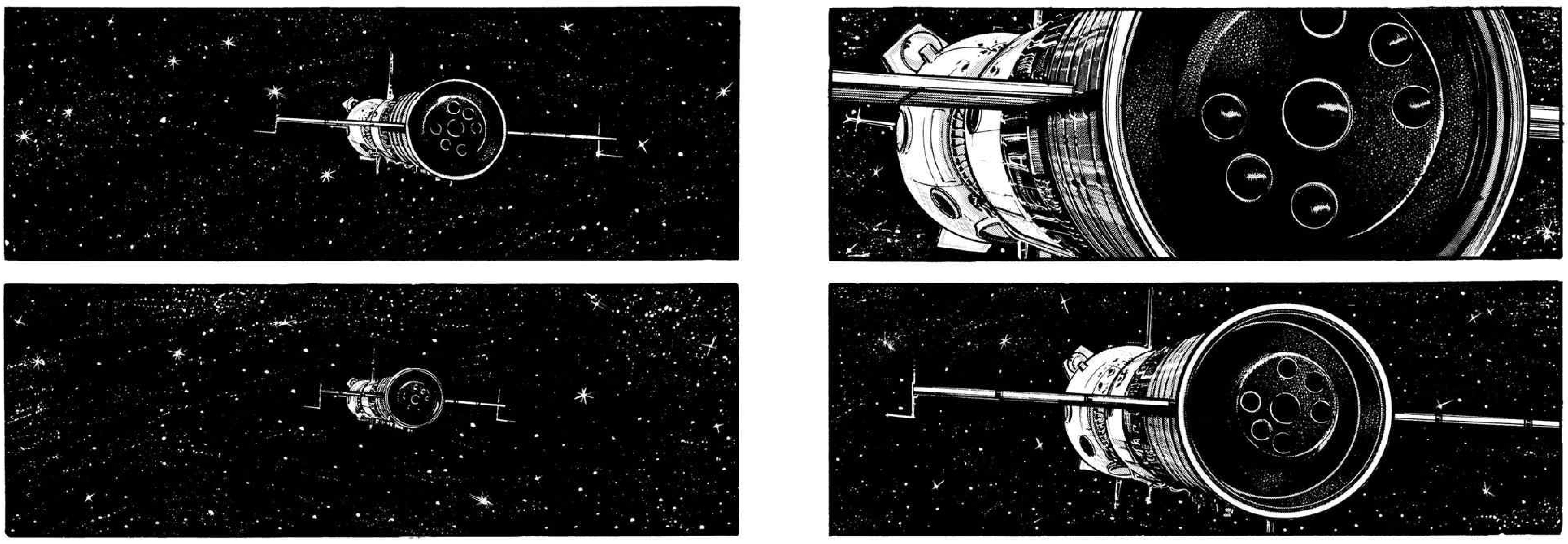

...STARTING TO LOSE MY SENSE OF WONDER.
I'LL BE GLAD WHEN THEY CANCEL THIS PROGRAM SOON. SIX 30-DAY PATROLS IN THE LAST YEAR...
PROBABLY JUST AFRAID WE'RE GONNA TRY TO SNEAK UP ON THE RUSSIANS AND HITCH A RIDE BACK DOWN..."*DA*, COMRADE, WE ARE *SECRET* SOYUZ!"
ALABASTER, YOU ARE GO FOR MANEUVER AFTER ARS SWITCH CONFIRM, OVER.
ROGER, CONTROL.
AW, C'MON... SPACE, THE FINAL FRONTIER!
TWO MINUTES TO BURN. ARS LOCK-OUT SWITCH, SAFETY OPEN.
ARS LOCK-OUT, TWO, ON, UP.
chik
YES, SIR.
READY WHEN YOU ARE, JAKE.


BURN IN 45...
...IN 30...
SECURE FOR MANEUVER. SURGE TANK AT 800...LOOKS IN THE GROOVE, COMMANDER.
COLLISION WARNING, COLLISION WARNING!
COMM!
JAKE, I'M GETTING A WARNING CODE...
RADAR, AHEAD, CONFIRM...

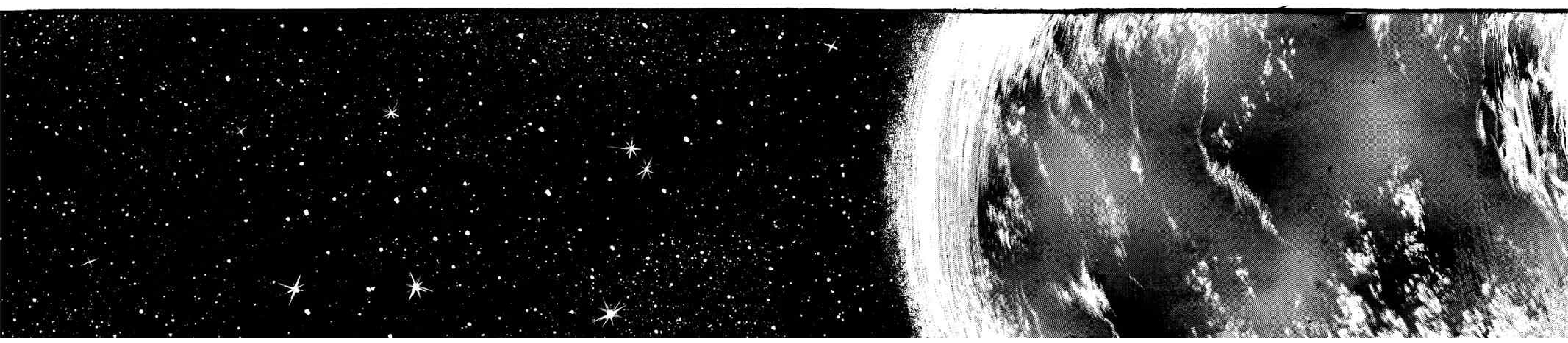

JAKE! CANCEL LOCK-OUT--
CONTROL!
DO YOU COPY?



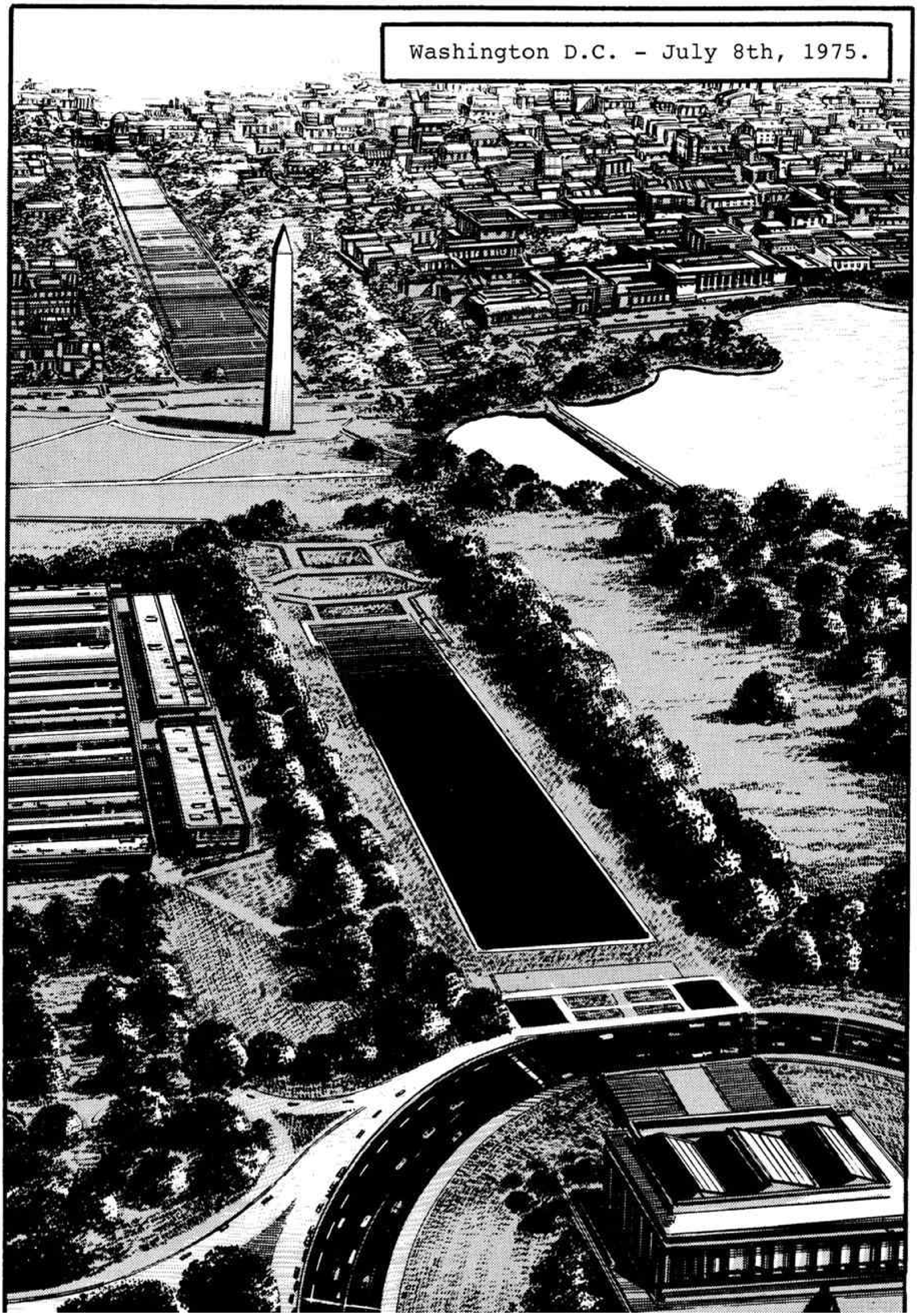
ARS

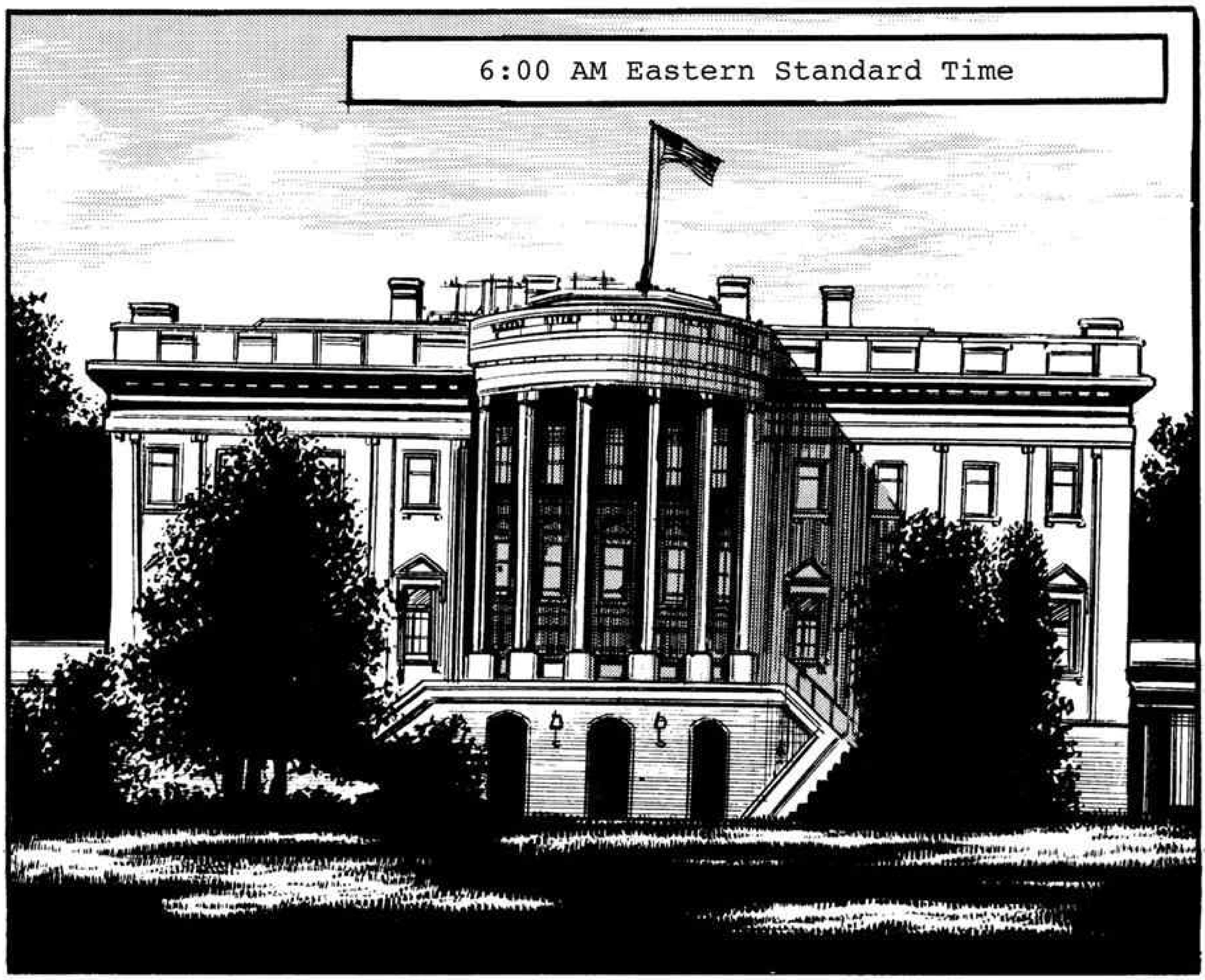


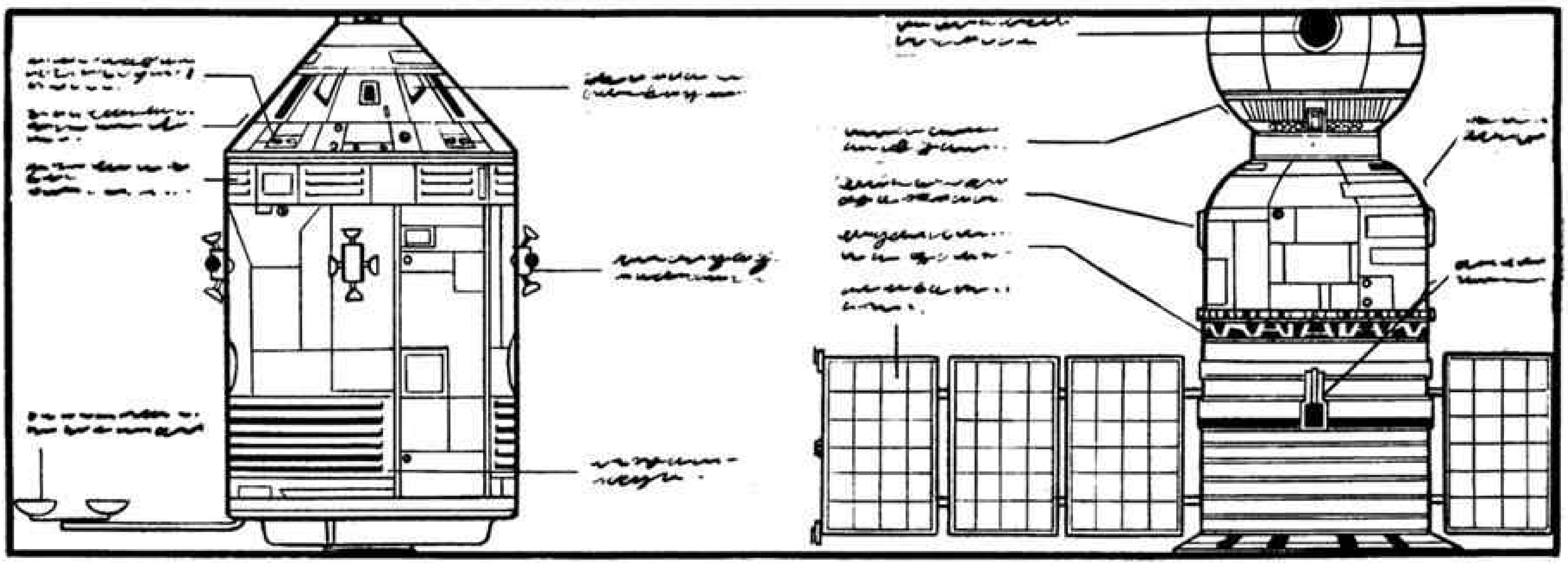
THE ORBITAL HIT

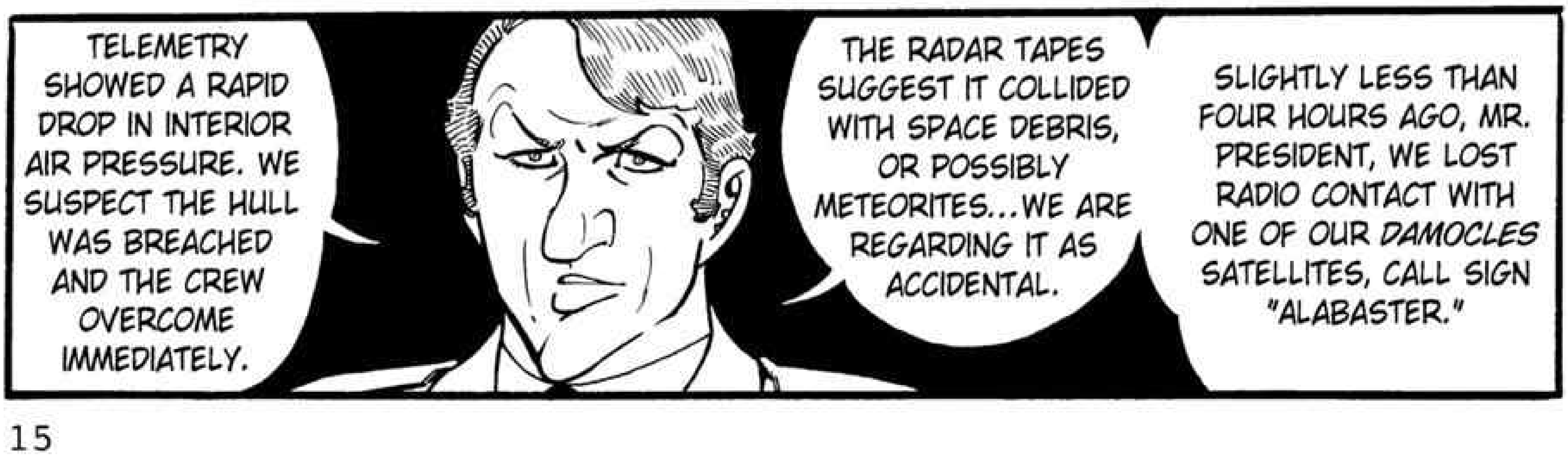


PART 1 THE SWORD OF DAMOCLES

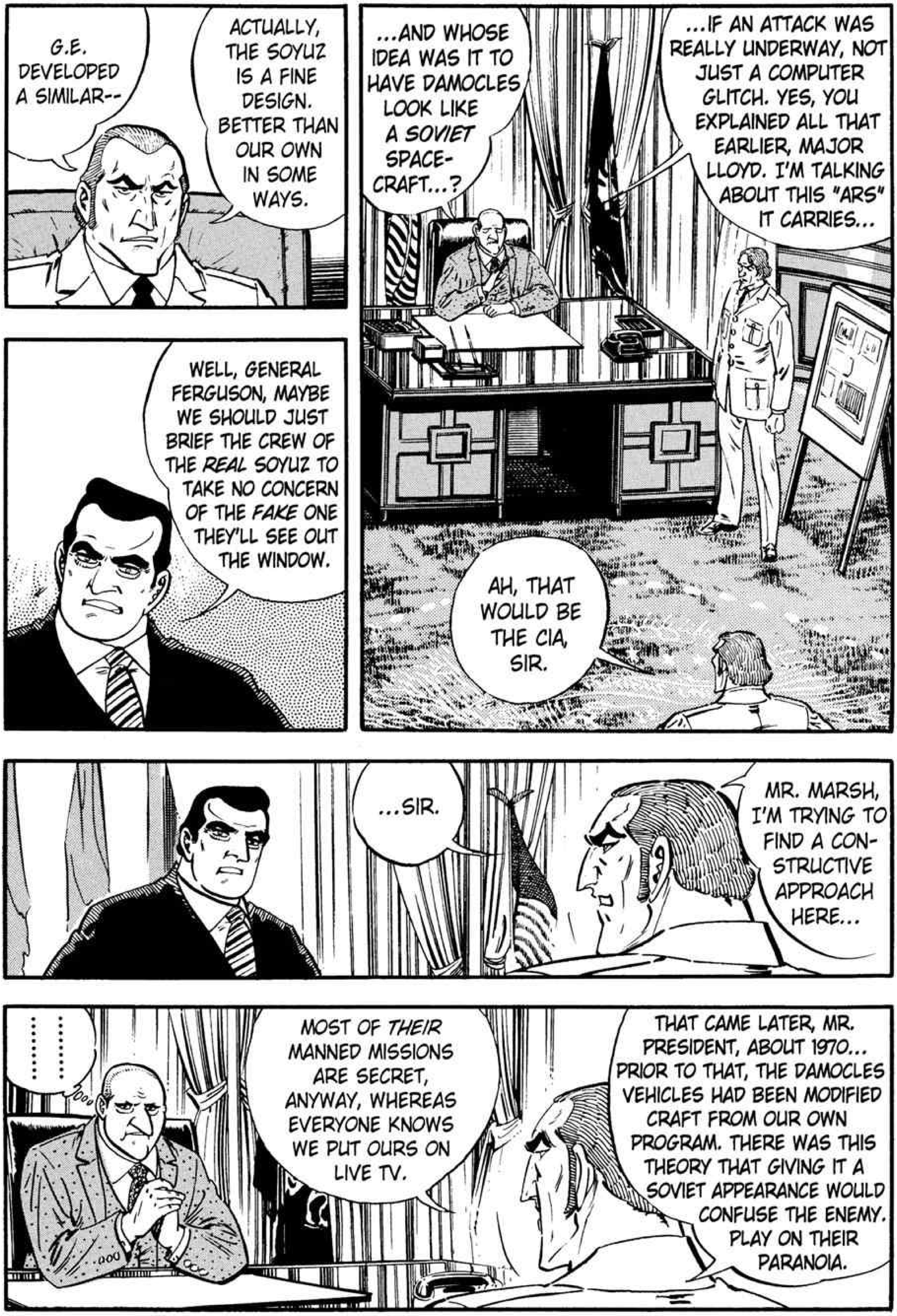

Washington D.C. - July 8th, 1975.

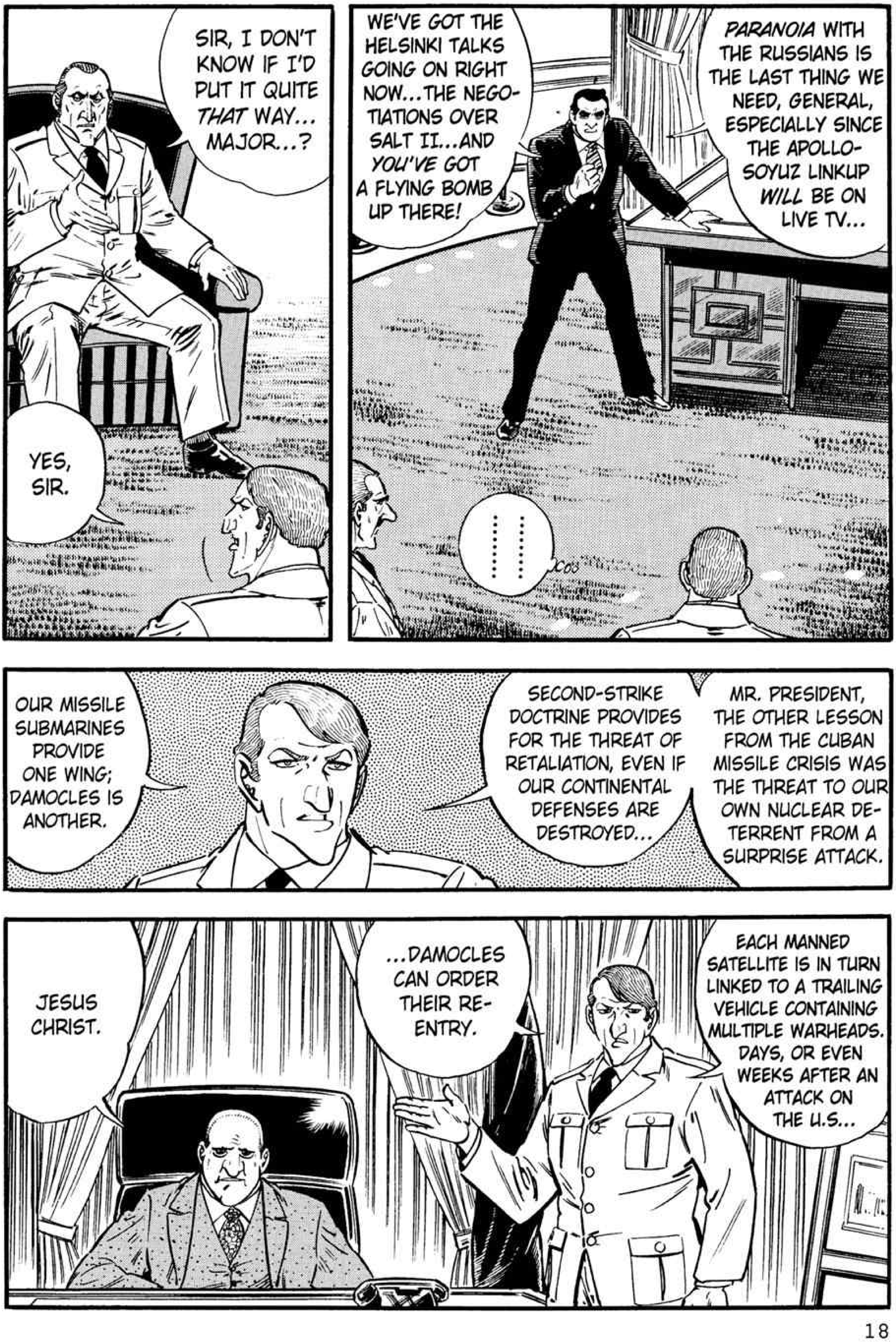

6:00 AM Eastern Standard Time

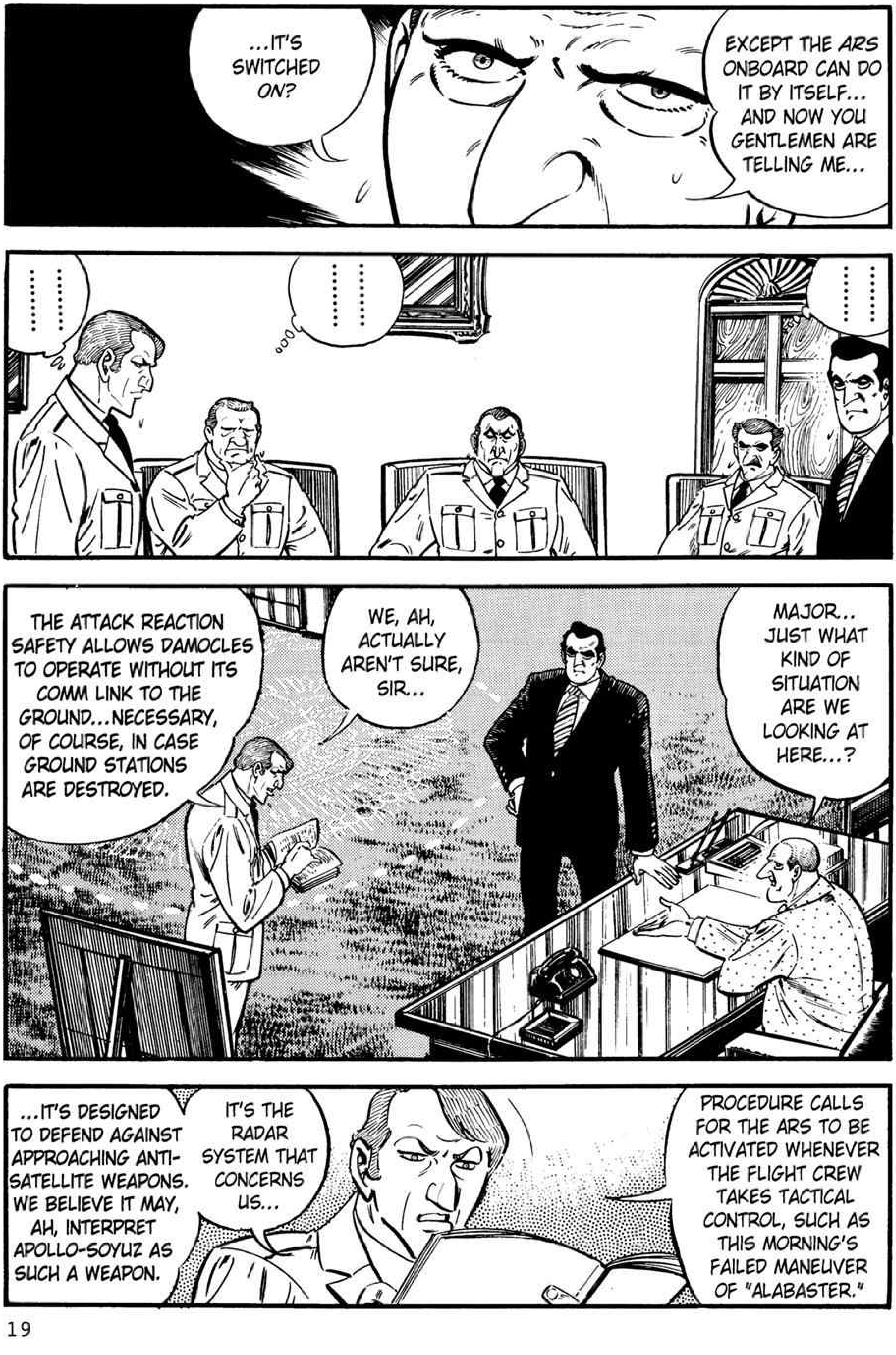


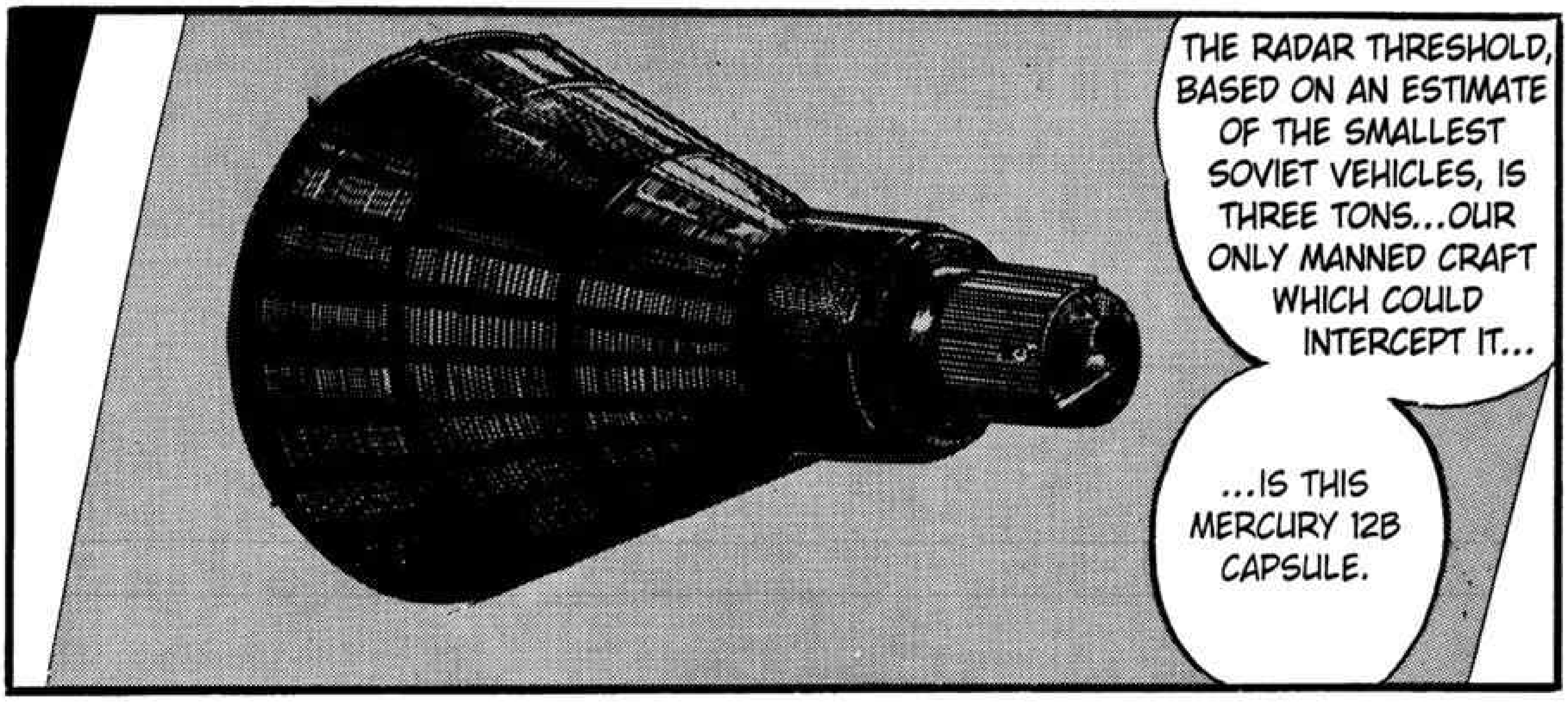

SLIGHTLY LESS THAN FOUR HOURS AGO, MR. PRESIDENT, WE LOST RADIO CONTACT WITH ONE OF OUR *DAMOCLES* SATELLITES, CALL SIGN "ALABASTER."
THE RADAR TAPES SUGGEST IT COLLIDED WITH SPACE DEBRIS, OR POSSIBLY METEORITES...WE ARE REGARDING IT AS ACCIDENTAL.
TELEMETRY SHOWED A RAPID DROP IN INTERIOR AIR PRESSURE. WE SUSPECT THE HULL WAS BREACHED AND THE CREW OVERCOME IMMEDIATELY.

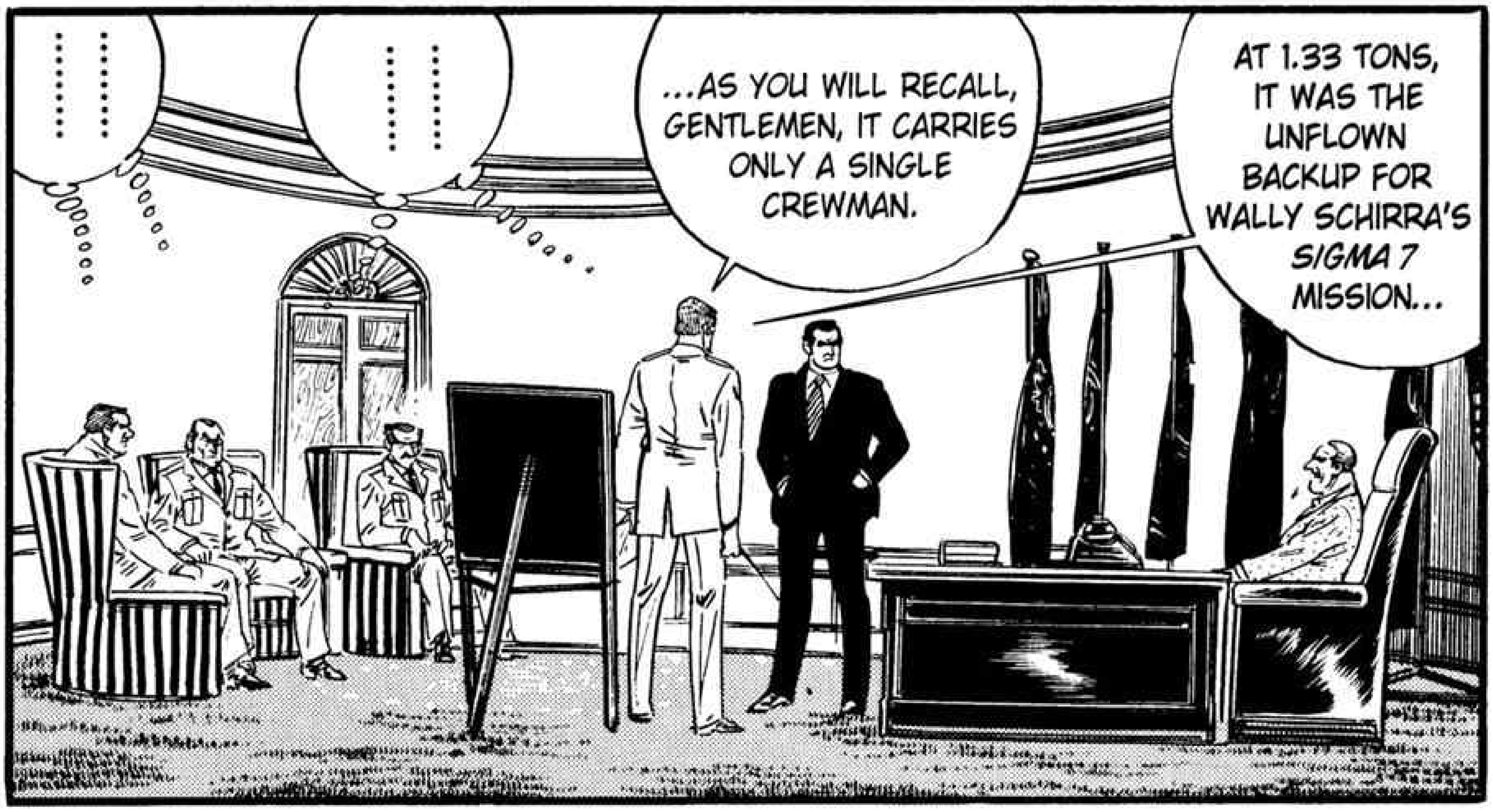
ORIGINALLY WITHIN RADAR--NOW, POSSIBLY, WITHIN VISUAL RANGE ...
AH, YES, SIR.
THEY WERE MOVING THEIR ORBIT TO AVOID THE APOLLO-SOYUZ RENDEZVOUS NEXT WEEK...AND NOW THEY'LL BE *CLOSER* TO IT?
...GENTLEMEN, I WAS *APPOINTED*, NOT ELECTED PRESIDENT, SO YOU'LL PERMIT ME TO SPEAK IN AN IMPOLITIC MANNER. I'M HERE AT THE END OF FIFTEEN YEARS OF BAD JUDGMENTS. I THOUGHT NOTHING COULD TOP WATERGATE AND VIETNAM...AND NOW YOU TELL ME ABOUT THIS... THIS "DAMOCLES."
SIR, DURING THE 1962 CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, THERE WERE *NINE* SEPARATE FALSE ALARMS OF SOVIET ATTACK THAT COULD HAVE TRIGGERED WAR. PRESIDENT KENNEDY AGREED A *LITERAL* OVERSIGHT WAS NEEDED.
HE WANTED TRAINED CREWS, ABLE TO OBSERVE FROM SPACE ...

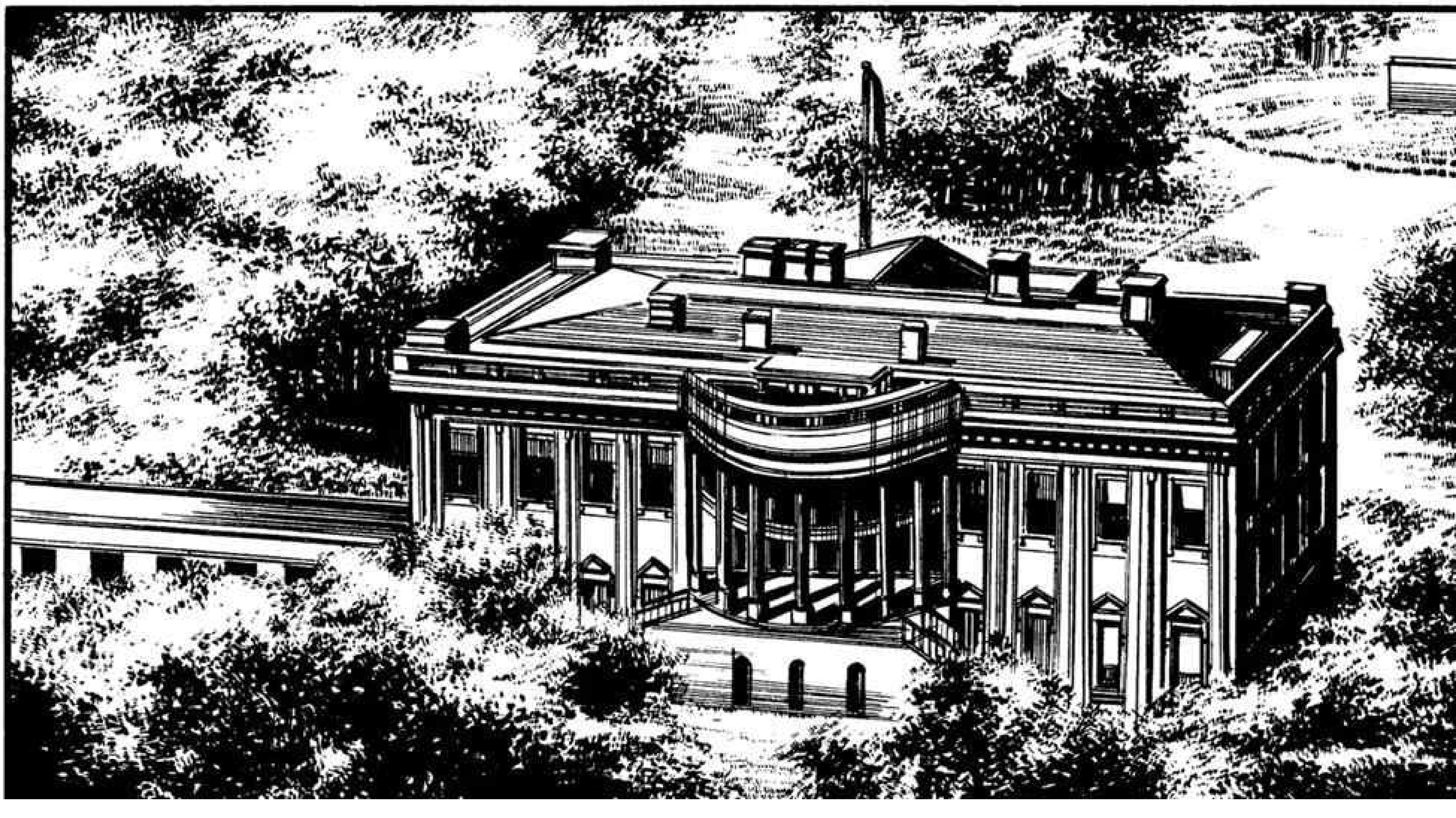

G.E. DEVELOPED A SIMILAR--
ACTUALLY, THE SOYUZ IS A FINE DESIGN. BETTER THAN OUR OWN IN SOME WAYS.
WELL, GENERAL FERGUSON, MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST BRIEF THE CREW OF THE *REAL* SOYUZ TO TAKE NO CONCERN OF THE *FAKE* ONE THEY'LL SEE OUT THE WINDOW.
...IF AN ATTACK WAS REALLY UNDERWAY, NOT JUST A COMPUTER GLITCH. YES, YOU EXPLAINED ALL THAT EARLIER, MAJOR LLOYD. I'M TALKING ABOUT THIS "ARS" IT CARRIES...
...AND WHOSE IDEA WAS IT TO HAVE DAMOCLES LOOK LIKE A *SOVIET* SPACECRAFT...?
AH, THAT WOULD BE THE CIA, SIR.
...SIR.
MR. MARSH, I'M TRYING TO FIND A CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH HERE...
......
MOST OF *THEIR* MANNED MISSIONS ARE SECRET, ANYWAY, WHEREAS EVERYONE KNOWS WE PUT OURS ON LIVE TV.
THAT CAME LATER, MR. PRESIDENT, ABOUT 1970... PRIOR TO THAT, THE DAMOCLES VEHICLES HAD BEEN MODIFIED CRAFT FROM OUR OWN PROGRAM. THERE WAS THIS THEORY THAT GIVING IT A SOVIET APPEARANCE WOULD CONFUSE THE ENEMY. PLAY ON THEIR PARANOIA.

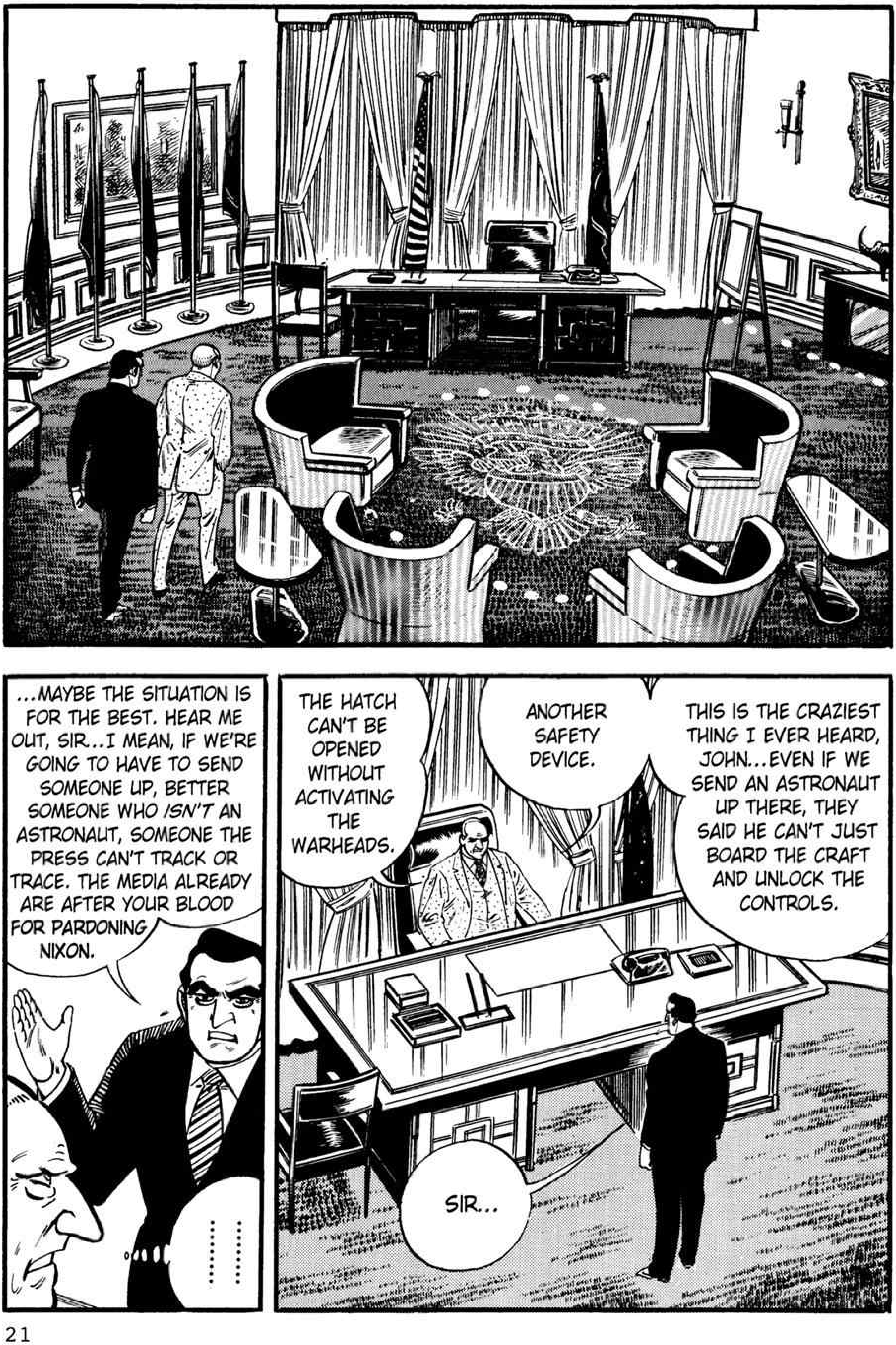

PARANOIA WITH THE RUSSIANS IS THE LAST THING WE NEED, GENERAL, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE APOLLO-SOYUZ LINKUP *WILL* BE ON LIVE TV...
WE'VE GOT THE HELSINKI TALKS GOING ON RIGHT NOW...THE NEGOTIATIONS OVER SALT II...AND *YOU'VE* GOT A FLYING BOMB UP THERE!
......
SIR, I DON'T KNOW IF I'D PUT IT QUITE *THAT* WAY... MAJOR...?
YES, SIR.
MR. PRESIDENT, THE OTHER LESSON FROM THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS WAS THE THREAT TO OUR OWN NUCLEAR DETERRENT FROM A SURPRISE ATTACK.
SECOND-STRIKE DOCTRINE PROVIDES FOR THE THREAT OF RETALIATION, EVEN IF OUR CONTINENTAL DEFENSES ARE DESTROYED...
OUR MISSILE SUBMARINES PROVIDE ONE WING; DAMOCLES IS ANOTHER.
EACH MANNED SATELLITE IS IN TURN LINKED TO A TRAILING VEHICLE CONTAINING MULTIPLE WARHEADS. DAYS, OR EVEN WEEKS AFTER AN ATTACK ON THE U.S...
...DAMOCLES CAN ORDER THEIR RE-ENTRY.
JESUS CHRIST.

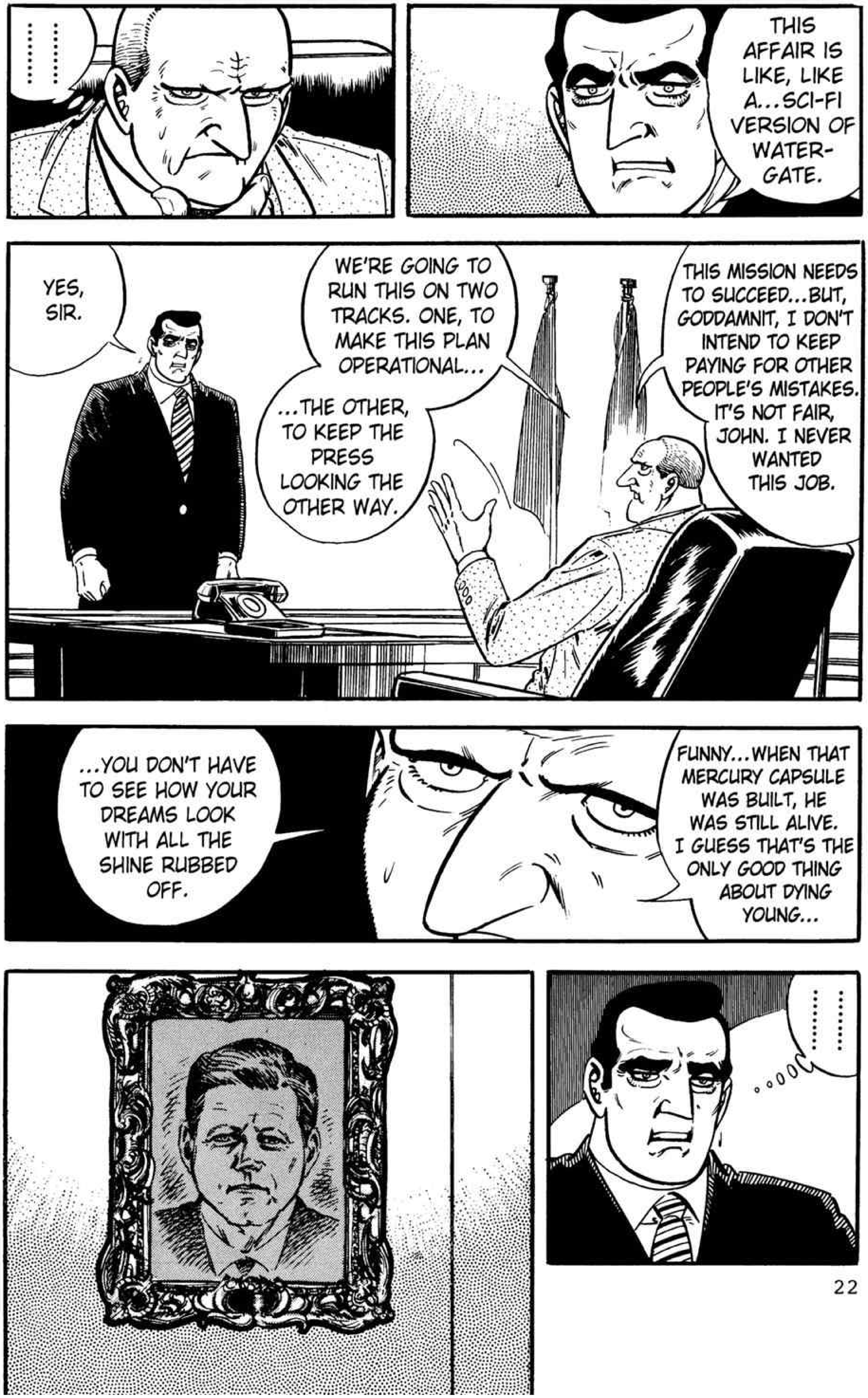

EXCEPT THE *ARS* ONBOARD CAN DO IT BY ITSELF... AND NOW YOU GENTLEMEN ARE TELLING ME...
...IT'S SWITCHED *ON?*
......
......
......
MAJOR.. JUST WHAT KIND OF SITUATION ARE WE LOOKING AT HERE...?
WE, AH, ACTUALLY AREN'T SURE, SIR...
THE ATTACK REACTION SAFETY ALLOWS DAMOCLES TO OPERATE WITHOUT ITS COMM LINK TO THE GROUND...NECESSARY, OF COURSE, IN CASE GROUND STATIONS ARE DESTROYED.
PROCEDURE CALLS FOR THE ARS TO BE ACTIVATED WHENEVER THE FLIGHT CREW TAKES TACTICAL CONTROL, SUCH AS THIS MORNING'S FAILED MANEUVER OF "ALABASTER."
IT'S THE RADAR SYSTEM THAT CONCERNS US...
...IT'S DESIGNED TO DEFEND AGAINST APPROACHING ANTI-SATELLITE WEAPONS. WE BELIEVE IT MAY, AH, INTERPRET APOLLO-SOYUZ AS SUCH A WEAPON.


THE RADAR THRESHOLD, BASED ON AN ESTIMATE OF THE SMALLEST SOVIET VEHICLES, IS THREE TONS...OUR ONLY MANNED CRAFT WHICH COULD INTERCEPT IT...
...IS THIS MERCURY 12B CAPSULE.

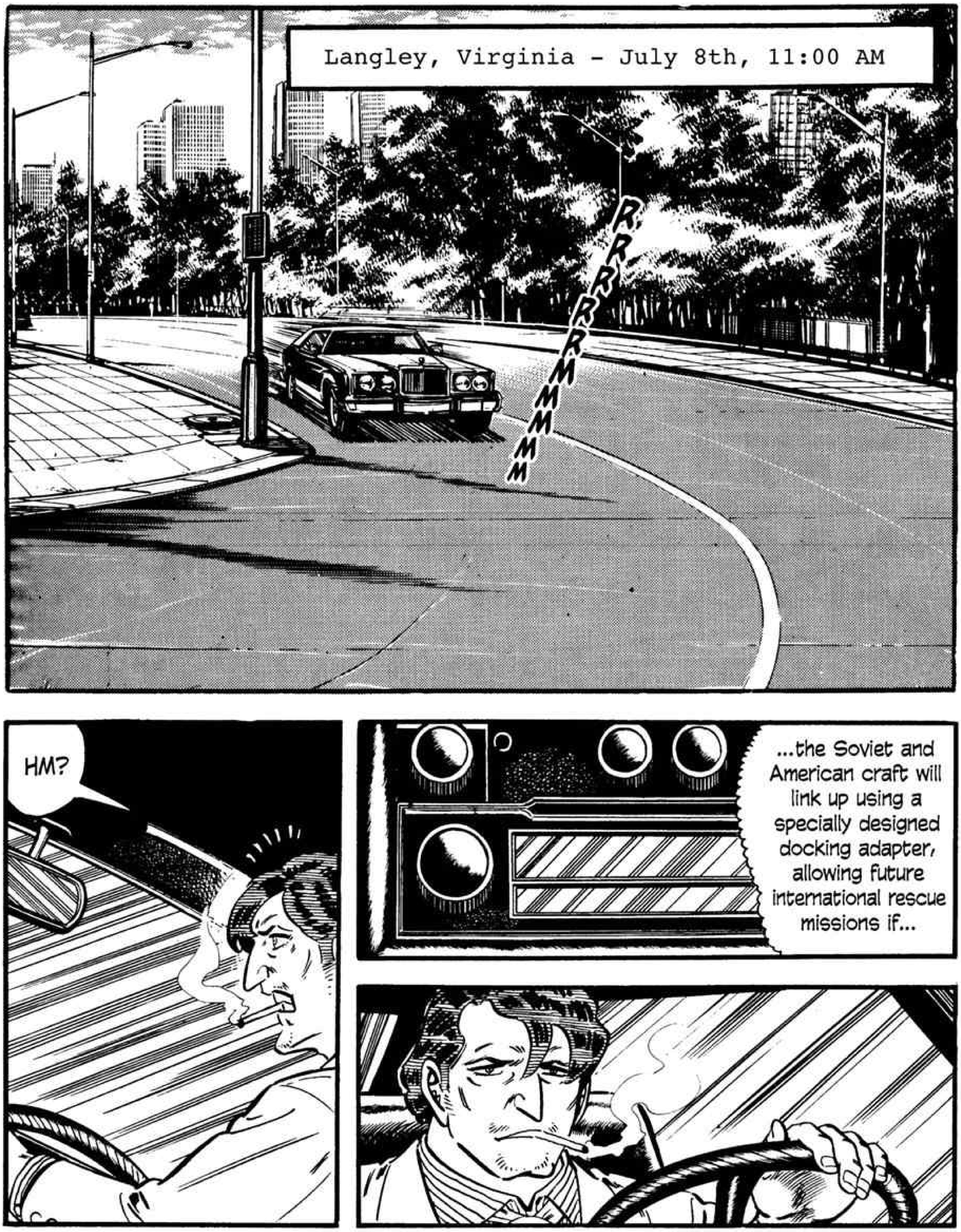

AT 1.33 TONS, IT WAS THE UNFLOWN BACKUP FOR WALLY SCHIRRA'S *SIGMA 7* MISSION...
...AS YOU WILL RECALL, GENTLEMEN, IT CARRIES ONLY A SINGLE CREWMAN.
……
……

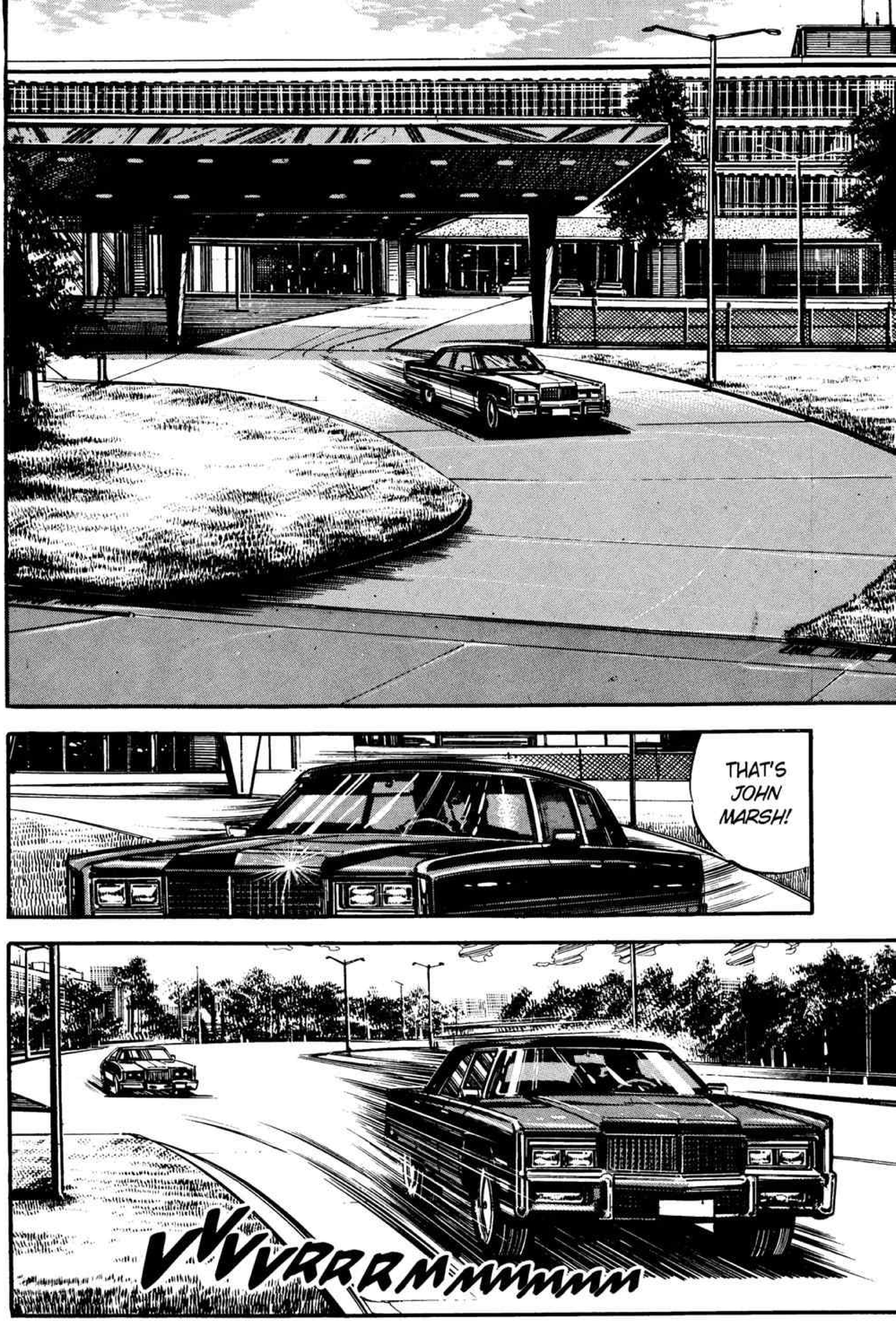


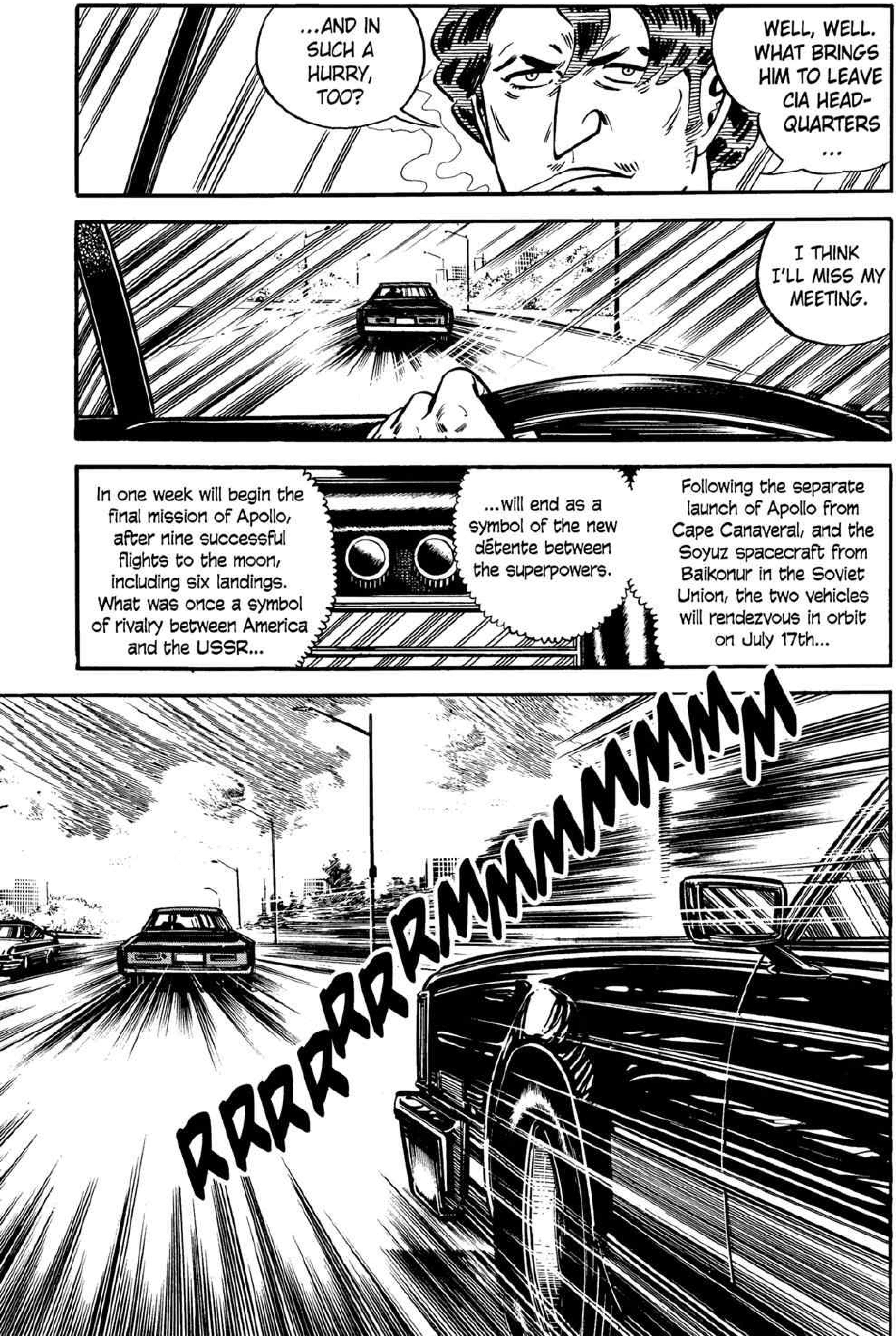

THIS IS THE CRAZIEST THING I EVER HEARD, JOHN...EVEN IF WE SEND AN ASTRONAUT UP THERE, THEY SAID HE CAN'T JUST BOARD THE CRAFT AND UNLOCK THE CONTROLS.
ANOTHER SAFETY DEVICE.
THE HATCH CAN'T BE OPENED WITHOUT ACTIVATING THE WARHEADS.
SIR...
...MAYBE THE SITUATION IS FOR THE BEST. HEAR ME OUT, SIR...I MEAN, IF WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO SEND SOMEONE UP, BETTER SOMEONE WHO *ISN'T* AN ASTRONAUT, SOMEONE THE PRESS CAN'T TRACK OR TRACE. THE MEDIA ALREADY ARE AFTER YOUR BLOOD FOR PARDONING NIXON.
......


THIS AFFAIR IS LIKE, LIKE A...SCI-FI VERSION OF WATERGATE.
......
THIS MISSION NEEDS TO SUCCEED...BUT, GODDAMNIT, I DON'T INTEND TO KEEP PAYING FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S MISTAKES. IT'S NOT FAIR, JOHN. I NEVER WANTED THIS JOB.
WE'RE GOING TO RUN THIS ON TWO TRACKS. ONE, TO MAKE THIS PLAN OPERATIONAL...
...THE OTHER, TO KEEP THE PRESS LOOKING THE OTHER WAY.
YES, SIR.
FUNNY...WHEN THAT MERCURY CAPSULE WAS BUILT, HE WAS STILL ALIVE. I GUESS THAT'S THE ONLY GOOD THING ABOUT DYING YOUNG...
...YOU DON'T HAVE TO SEE HOW YOUR DREAMS LOOK WITH ALL THE SHINE RUBBED OFF.
......

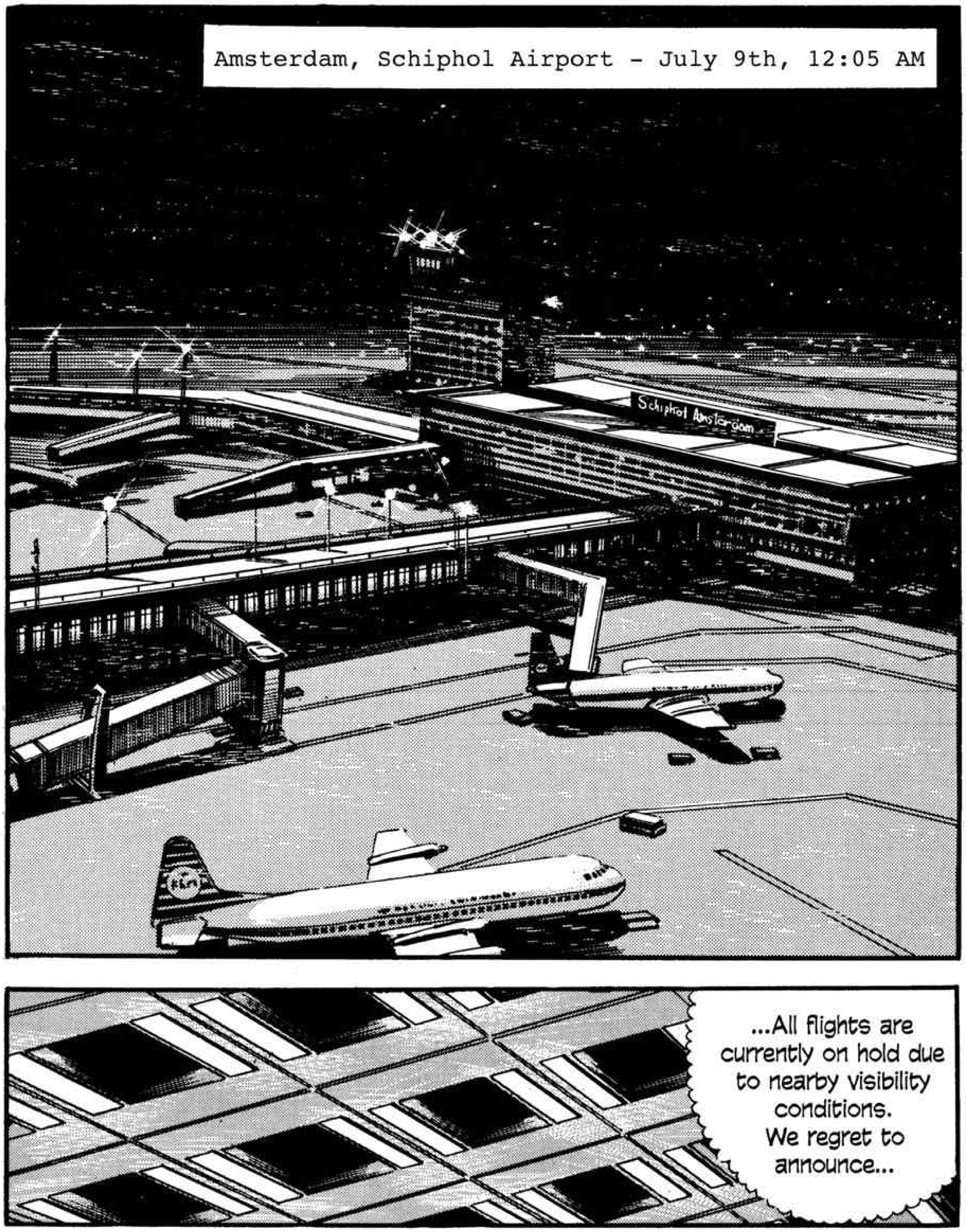
PART 2 SHORT TAIL


Langley, Virginia - July 8th, 11:00 AM
RRRRRRMMMMM
HM?
...the Soviet and American craft will link up using a specially designed docking adapter, allowing future international rescue missions if...


THAT'S JOHN MARSH!
VVVVRRRRMmmmmmm

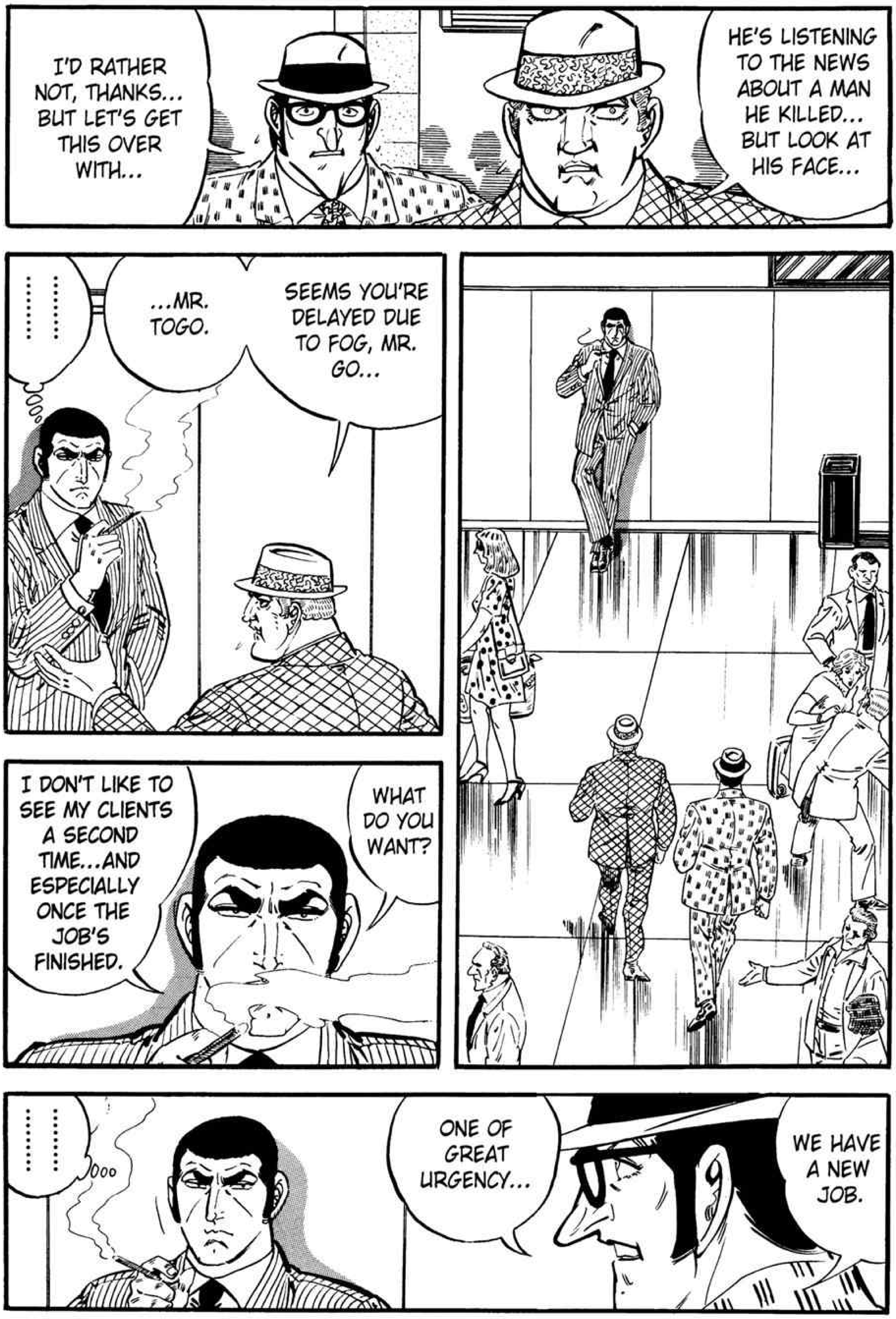

WELL, WELL. WHAT BRINGS HIM TO LEAVE CIA HEADQUARTERS ...
...AND IN SUCH A HURRY, TOO?
I THINK I'LL MISS MY MEETING.
In one week will begin the final mission of Apollo, after nine successful flights to the moon, including six landings. What was once a symbol of rivalry between America and the USSR...
...will end as a symbol of the new détente between the superpowers.
Following the separate launch of Apollo from Cape Canaveral, and the Soyuz spacecraft from Baikonur in the Soviet Union, the two vehicles will rendezvous in orbit on July 17th...
RRRRRRMMMMMMMM

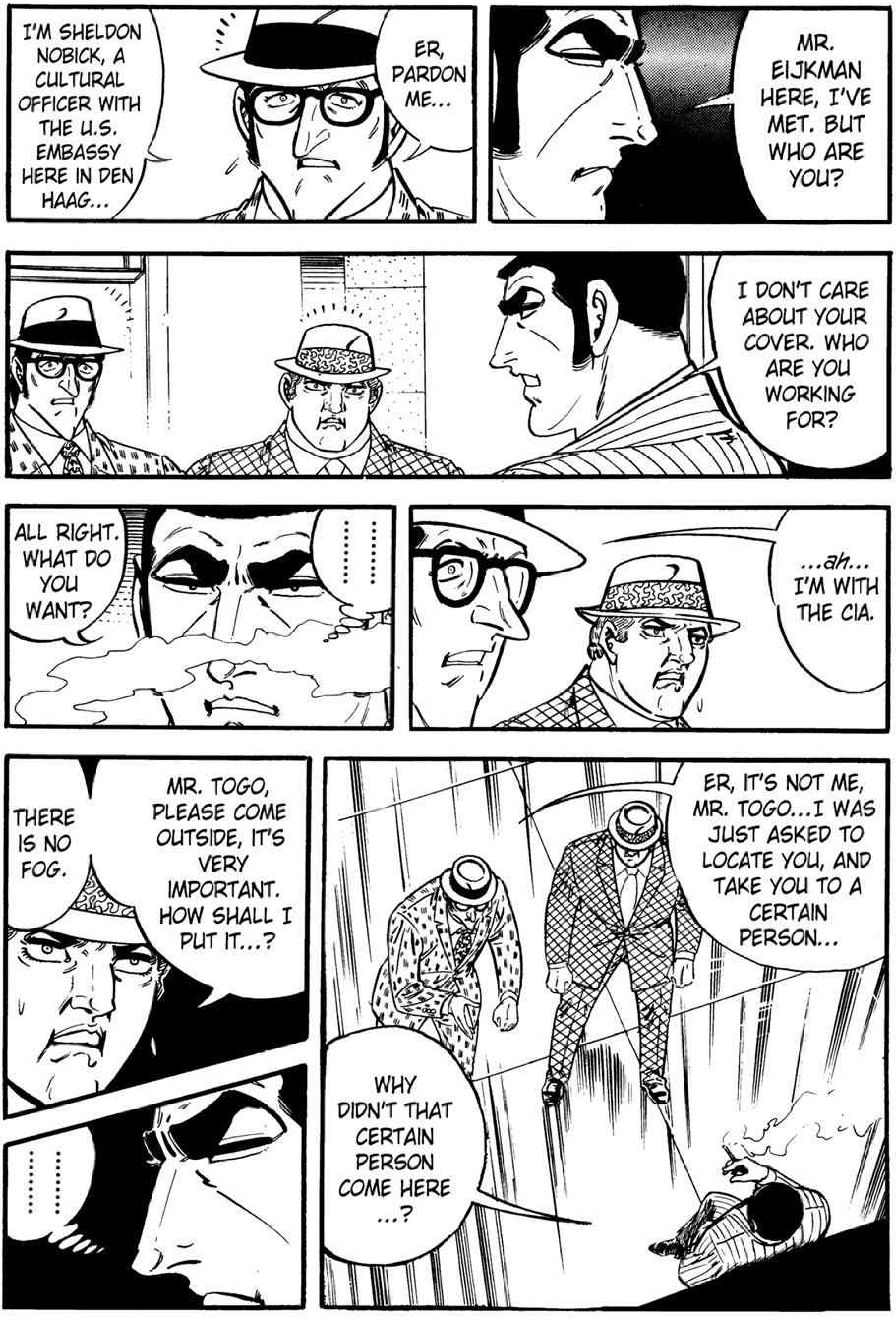
PART 3 MEETING IN TRANSIT

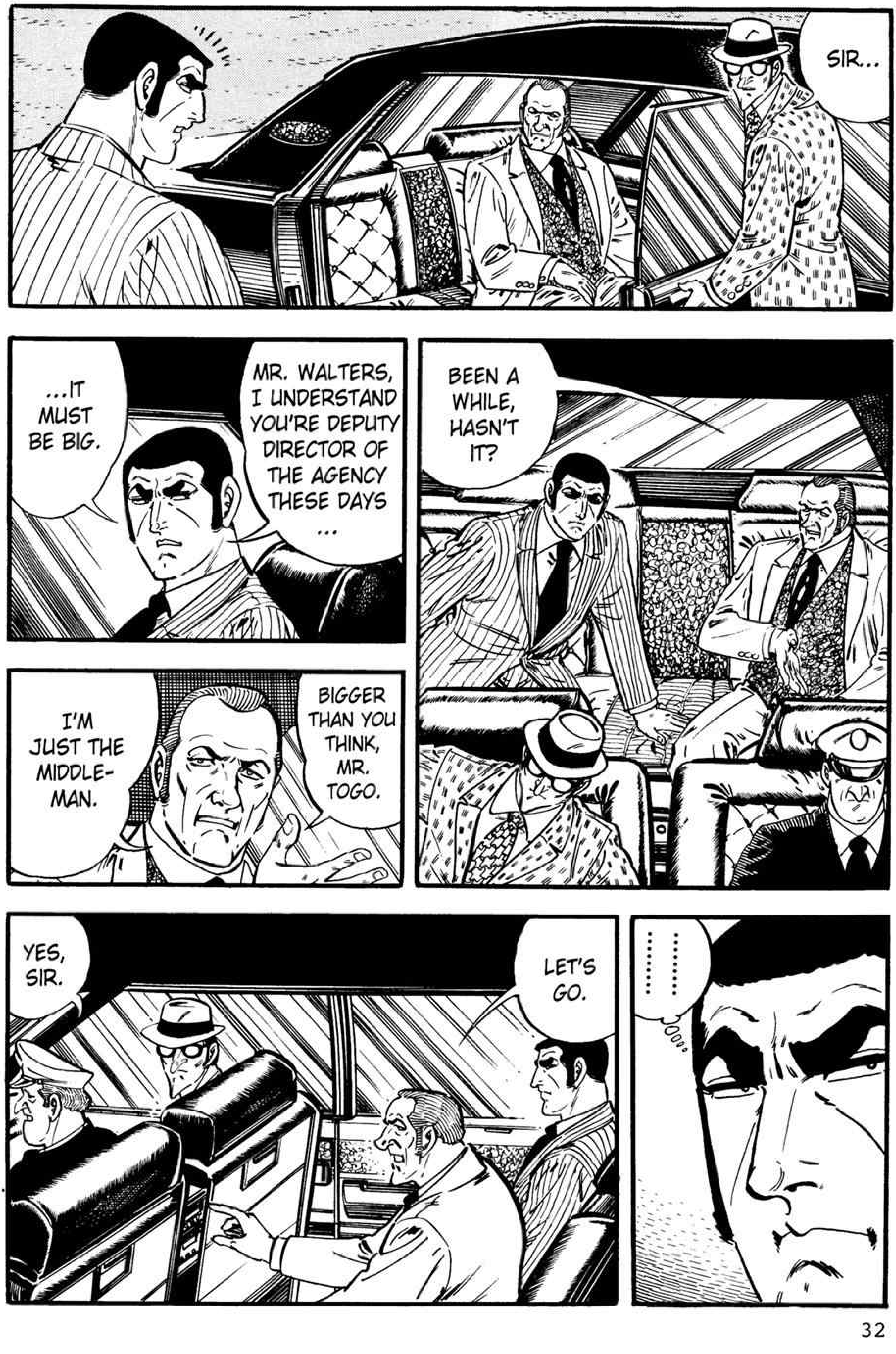

Amsterdam, Schiphol Airport - July 9th, 12:05 AM
Schiphol Amsterdam
...All flights are currently on hold due to nearby visibility conditions. We regret to announce...

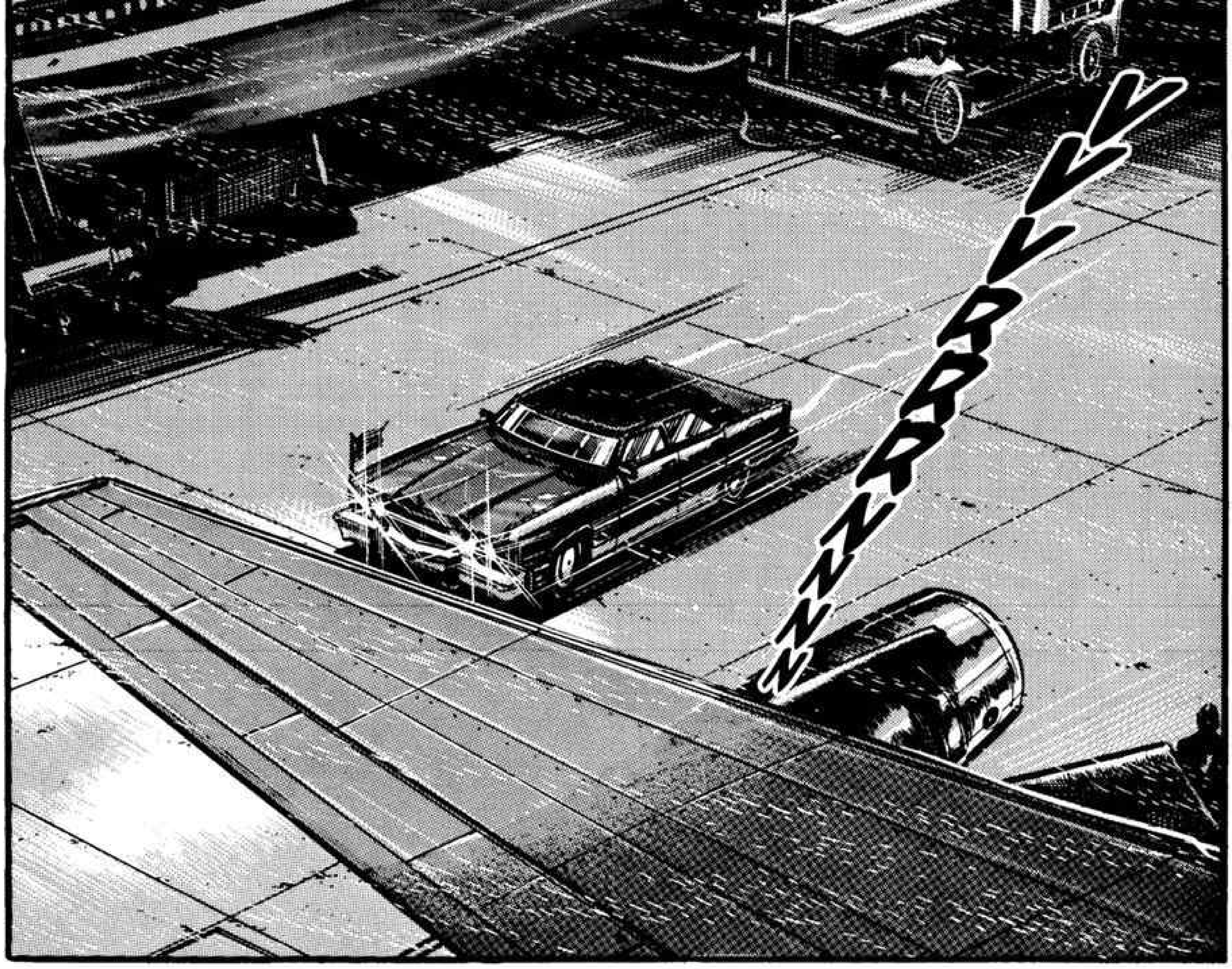
...found with a gunshot wound to the head. Mr. Diepenbrock was chairman of the labor union representing workers on the sea barrier project in the Eastern Schelde...
SORRY, HONEY-- FOG'S AROUND THE WHOLE DAMN AIRPORT. WE'RE NOT GONNA LET THIS RUIN THE ANNIVERSARY, ARE WE?
AW, HARRY! AND WE HAD BOOKED THAT *CHARMING* LITTLE PLACE IN PARIS!

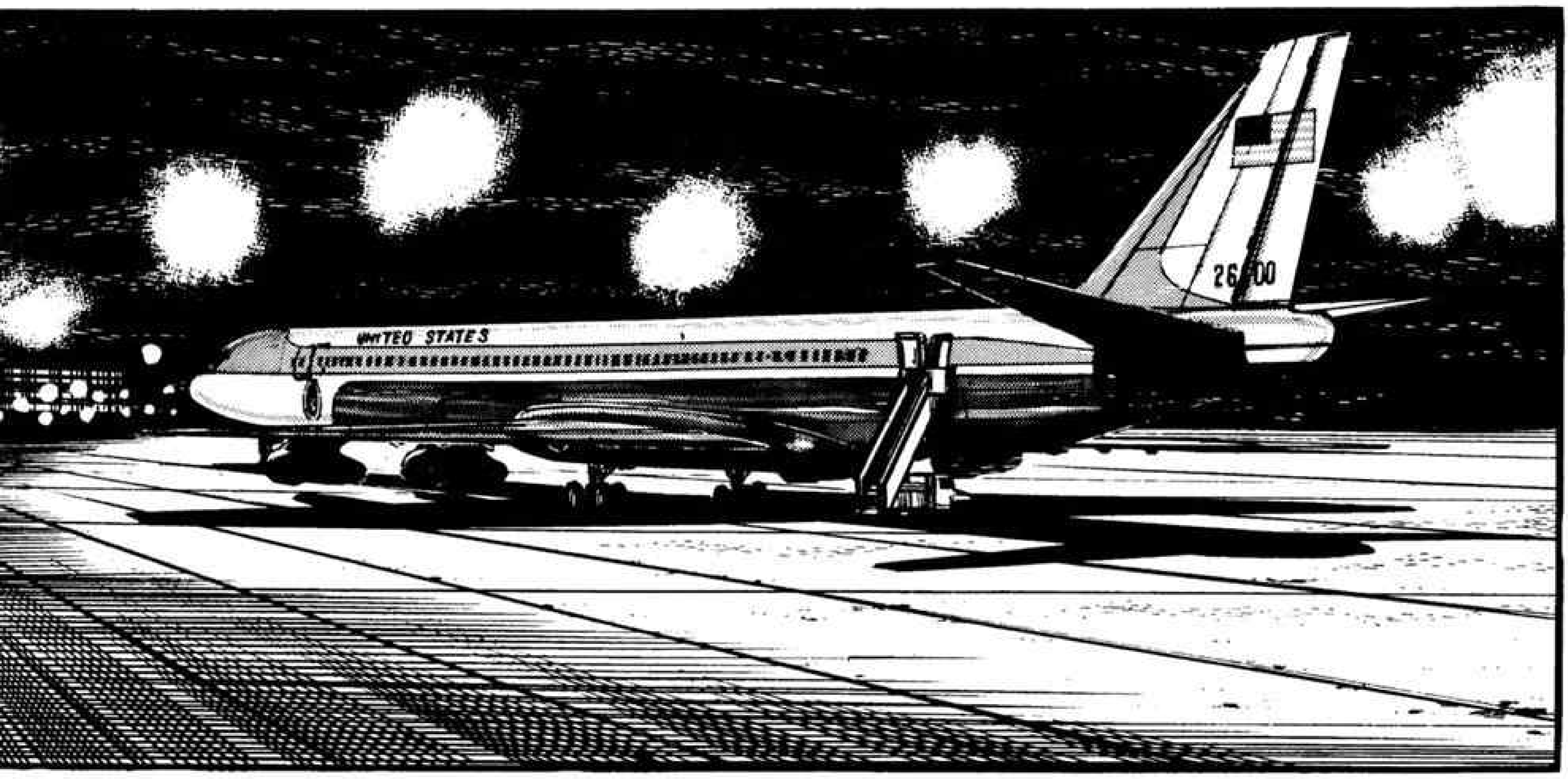
KLM
ticket and reserv
HUH?
THAT'S HIM!

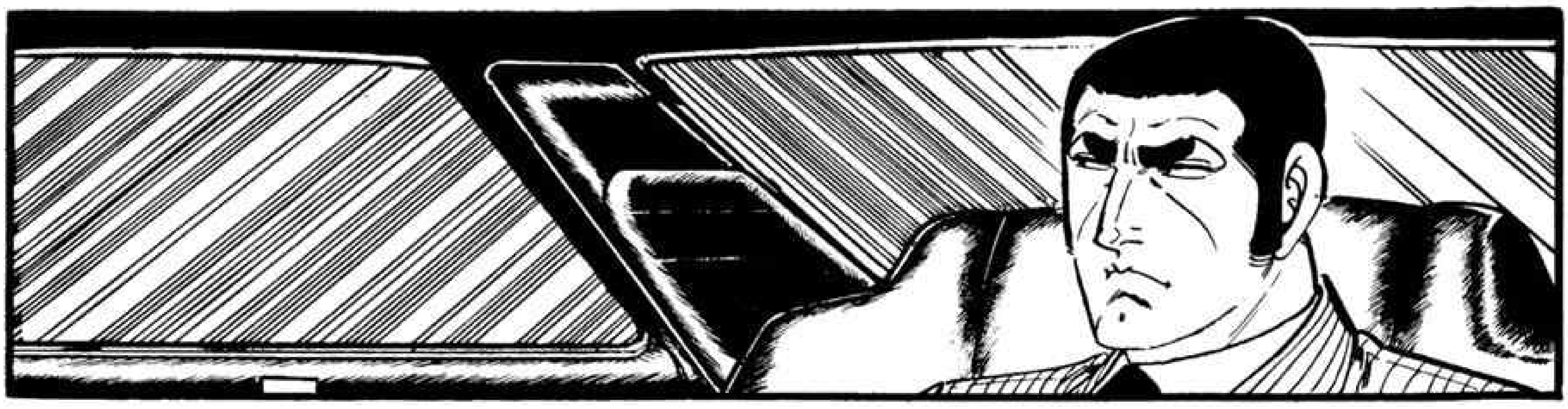

HE'S LISTENING TO THE NEWS ABOUT A MAN HE KILLED... BUT LOOK AT HIS FACE...
I'D RATHER NOT, THANKS... BUT LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH...
SEEMS YOU'RE DELAYED DUE TO FOG, MR. GO...
...MR. TOGO.
......
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I DON'T LIKE TO SEE MY CLIENTS A SECOND TIME...AND ESPECIALLY ONCE THE JOB'S FINISHED.
WE HAVE A NEW JOB.
ONE OF GREAT URGENCY...
......


ER, PARDON ME...
I'M SHELDON NOBICK, A CULTURAL OFFICER WITH THE U.S. EMBASSY HERE IN DEN HAAG...
MR. EIJKMAN HERE, I'VE MET. BUT WHO ARE YOU?
I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR COVER. WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR?
...ah... I'M WITH THE CIA.
......
ALL RIGHT. WHAT DO YOU WANT?
MR. TOGO, PLEASE COME OUTSIDE, IT'S VERY IMPORTANT. HOW SHALL I PUT IT...?
THERE IS NO FOG.
......
ER, IT'S NOT ME, MR. TOGO...I WAS JUST ASKED TO LOCATE YOU, AND TAKE YOU TO A CERTAIN PERSON...
WHY DIDN'T THAT CERTAIN PERSON COME HERE ...?

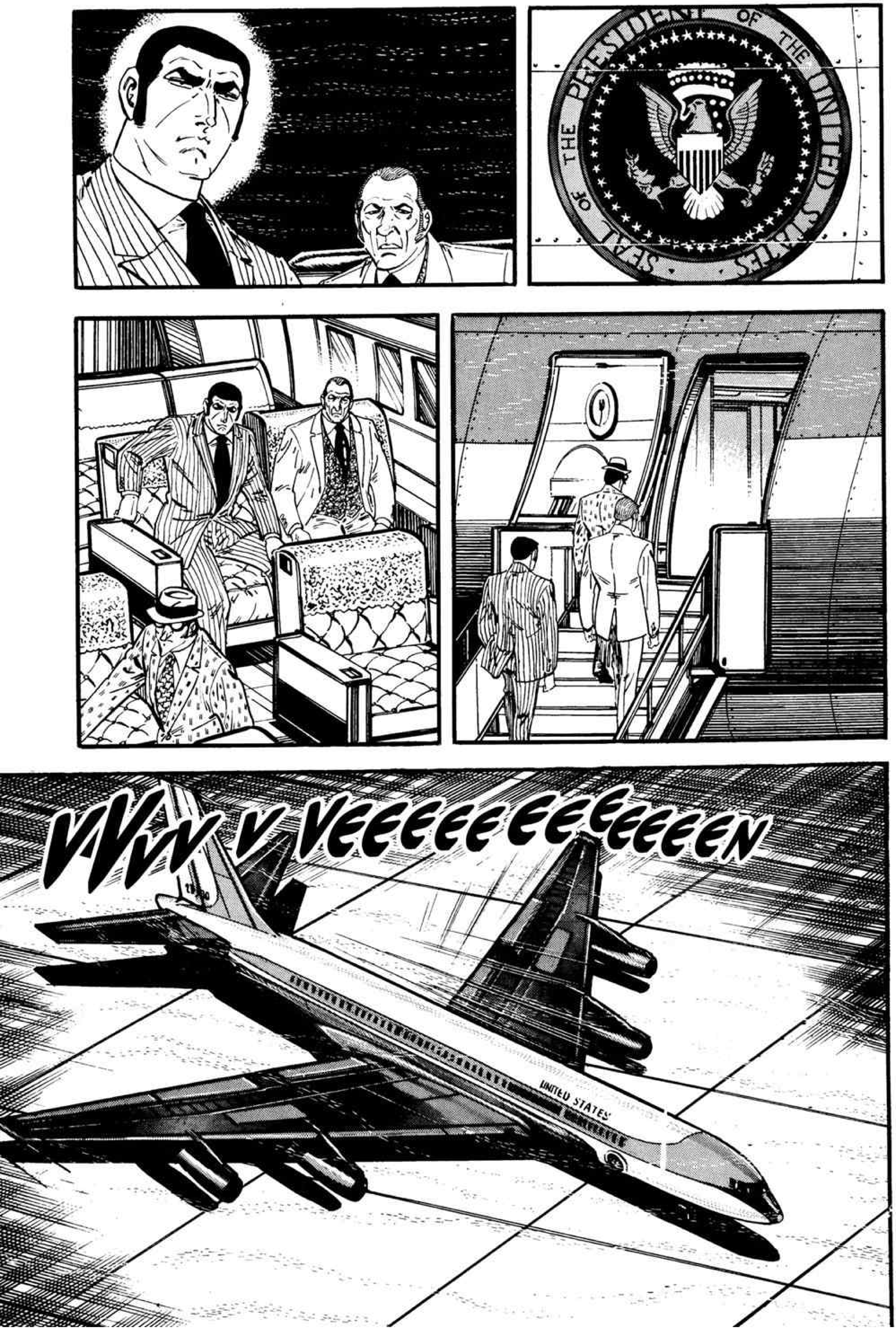

SIR...
BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
MR. WALTERS, I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE AGENCY THESE DAYS ...
...IT MUST BE BIG.
BIGGER THAN YOU THINK, MR. TOGO.
I'M JUST THE MIDDLE-MAN.
....
LET'S GO.
YES, SIR.


VVVRRRZZZZZ


UNITED STATES
26000

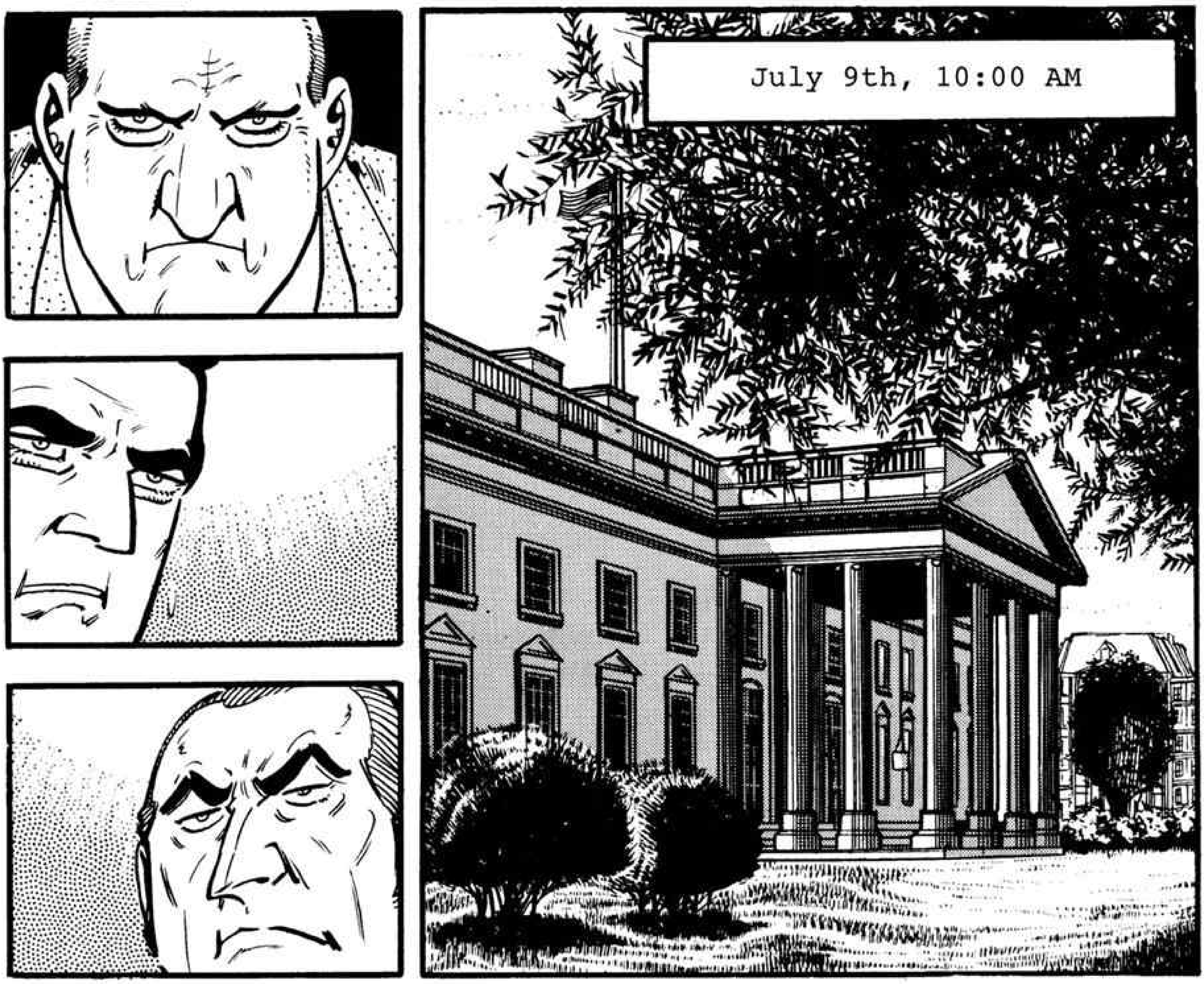


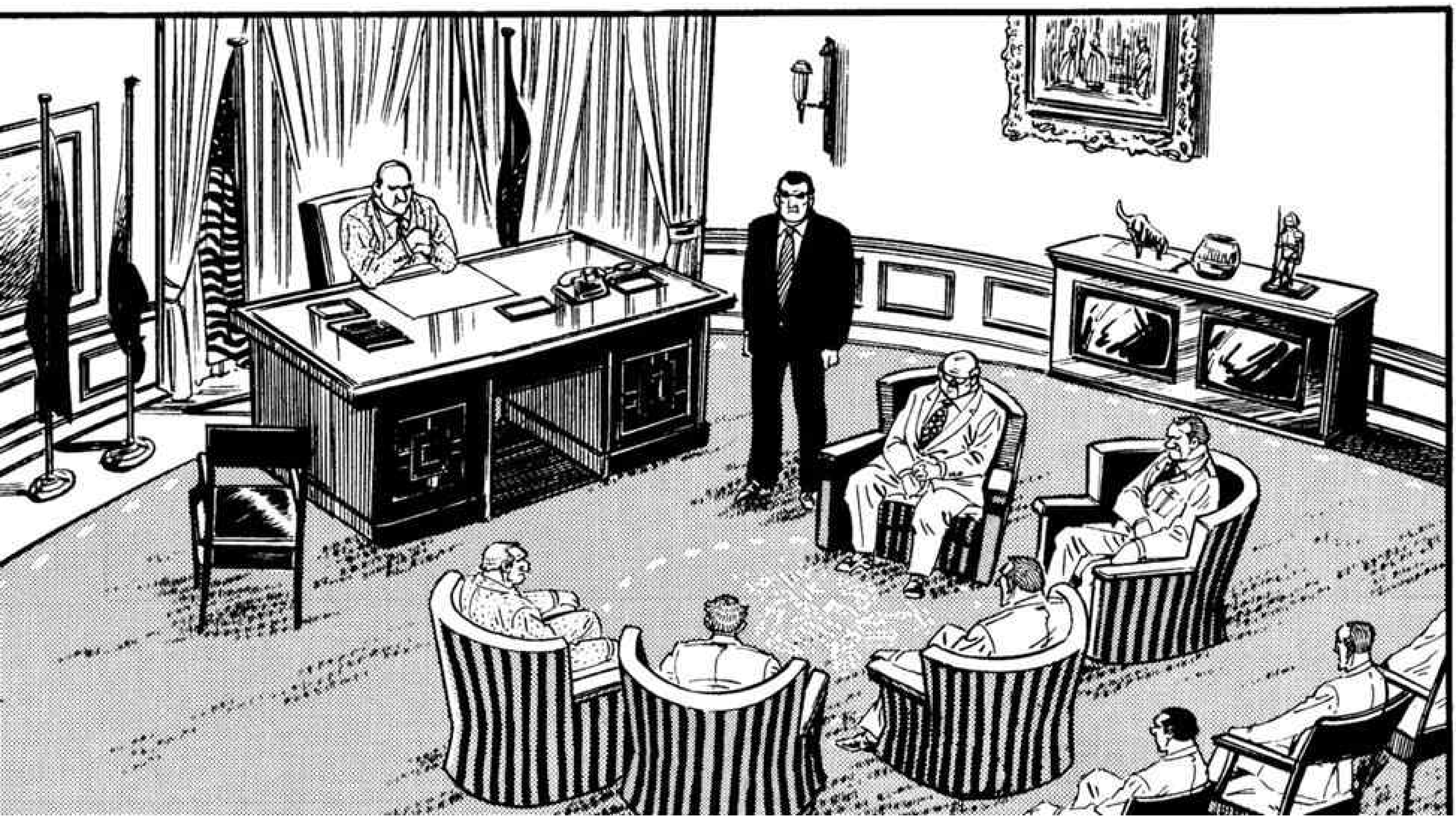
UNITED STATES
26500
RRRRMMMMMMMMM
UNITED STATES

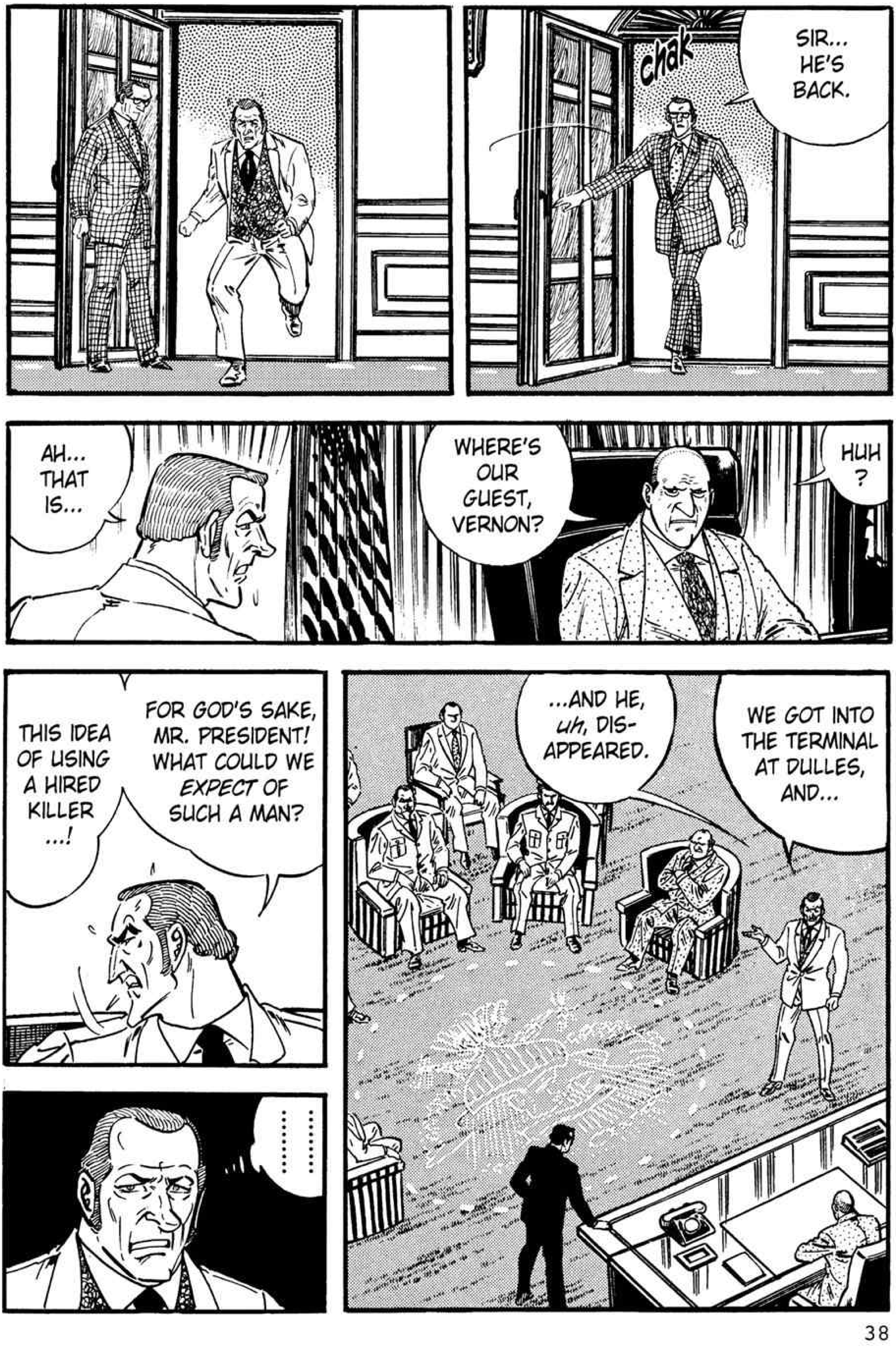

SEAL OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
VVVV V VEEEEEE EEEEEEEEN
UNITED STATES

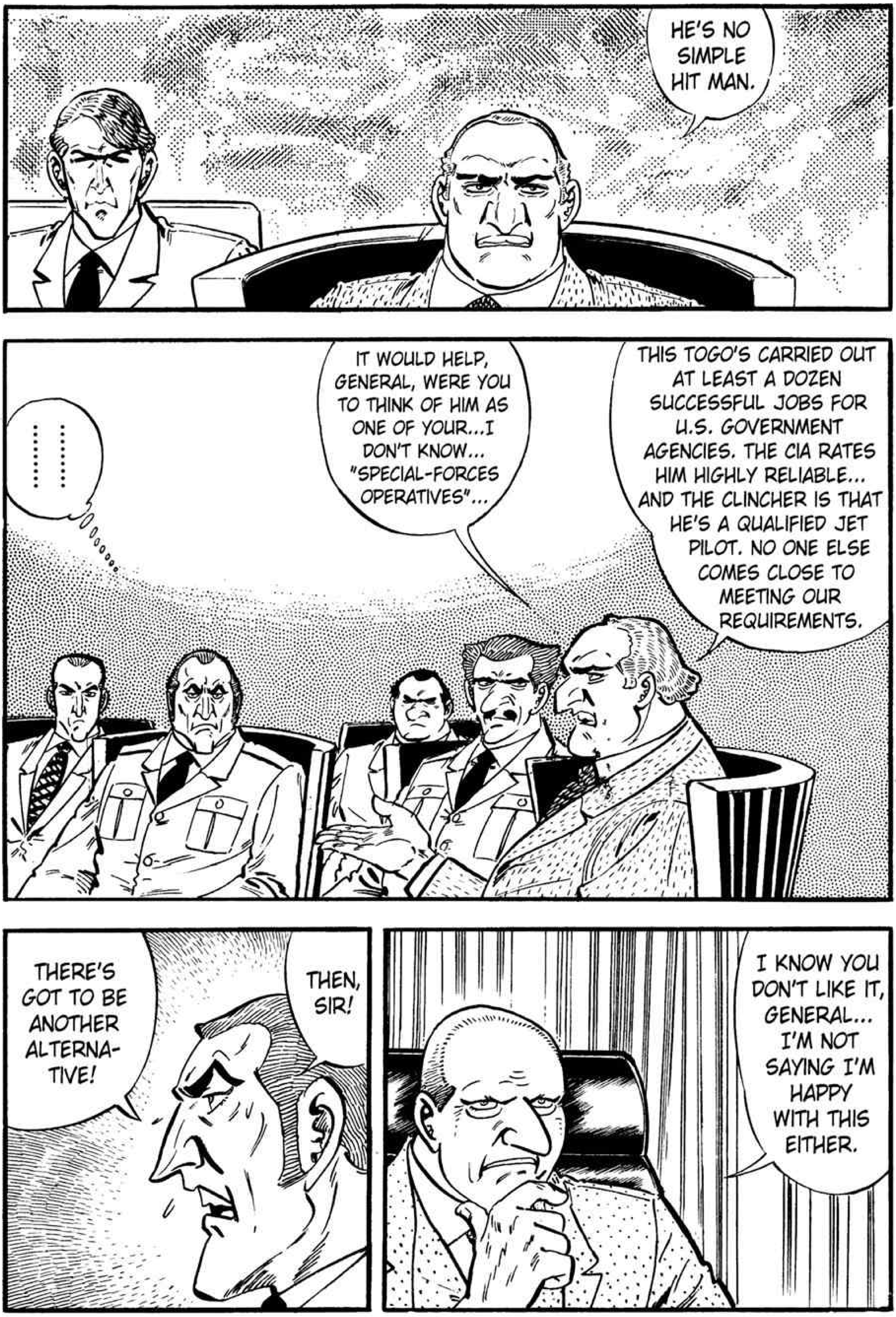
VVVRRRRNNNN
RRRMMMRRMMMMMMMMM
CHUNK

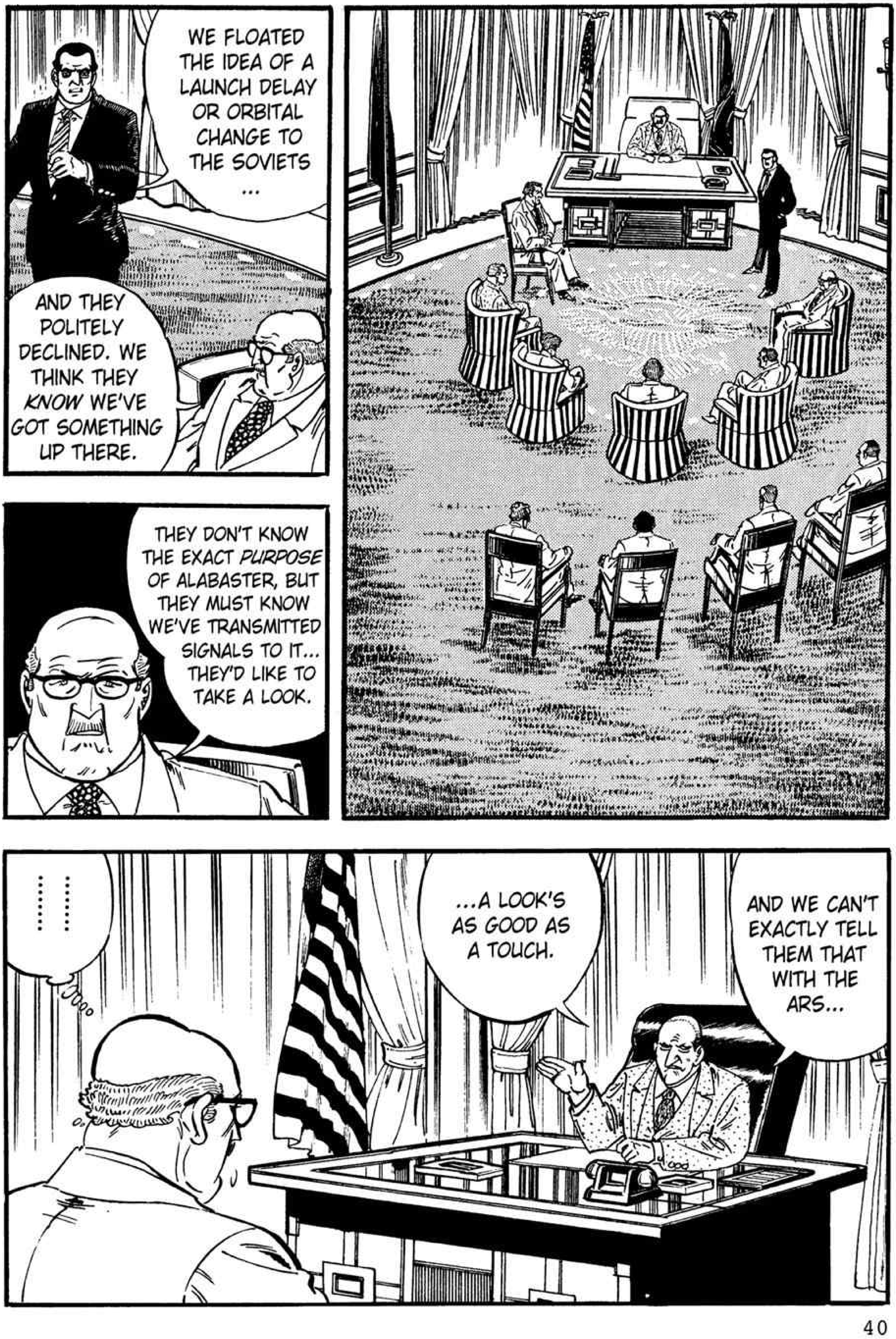
PART 4 THE UNFRIENDLY COLLABORATOR

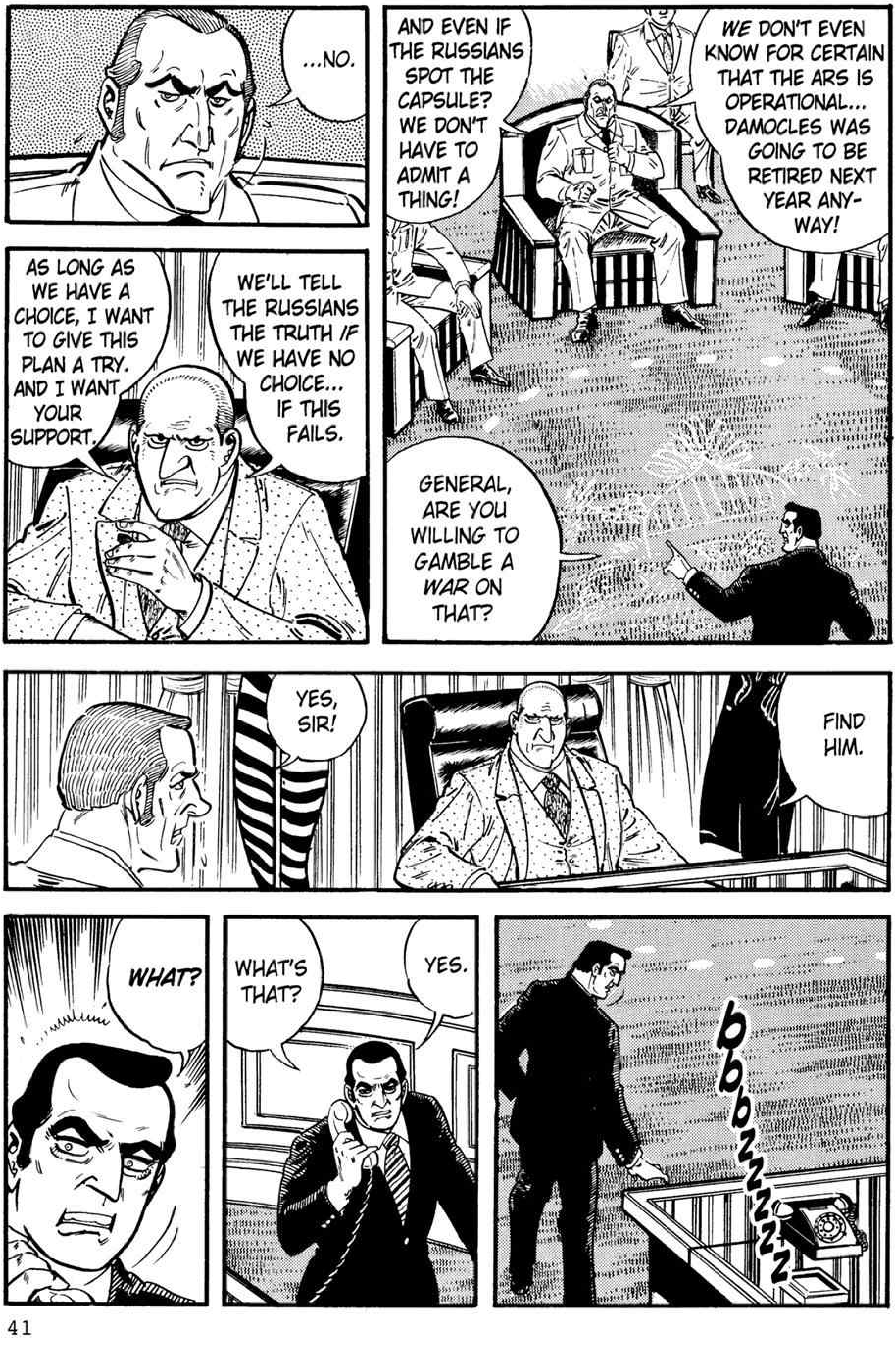

July 9th, 10:00 AM



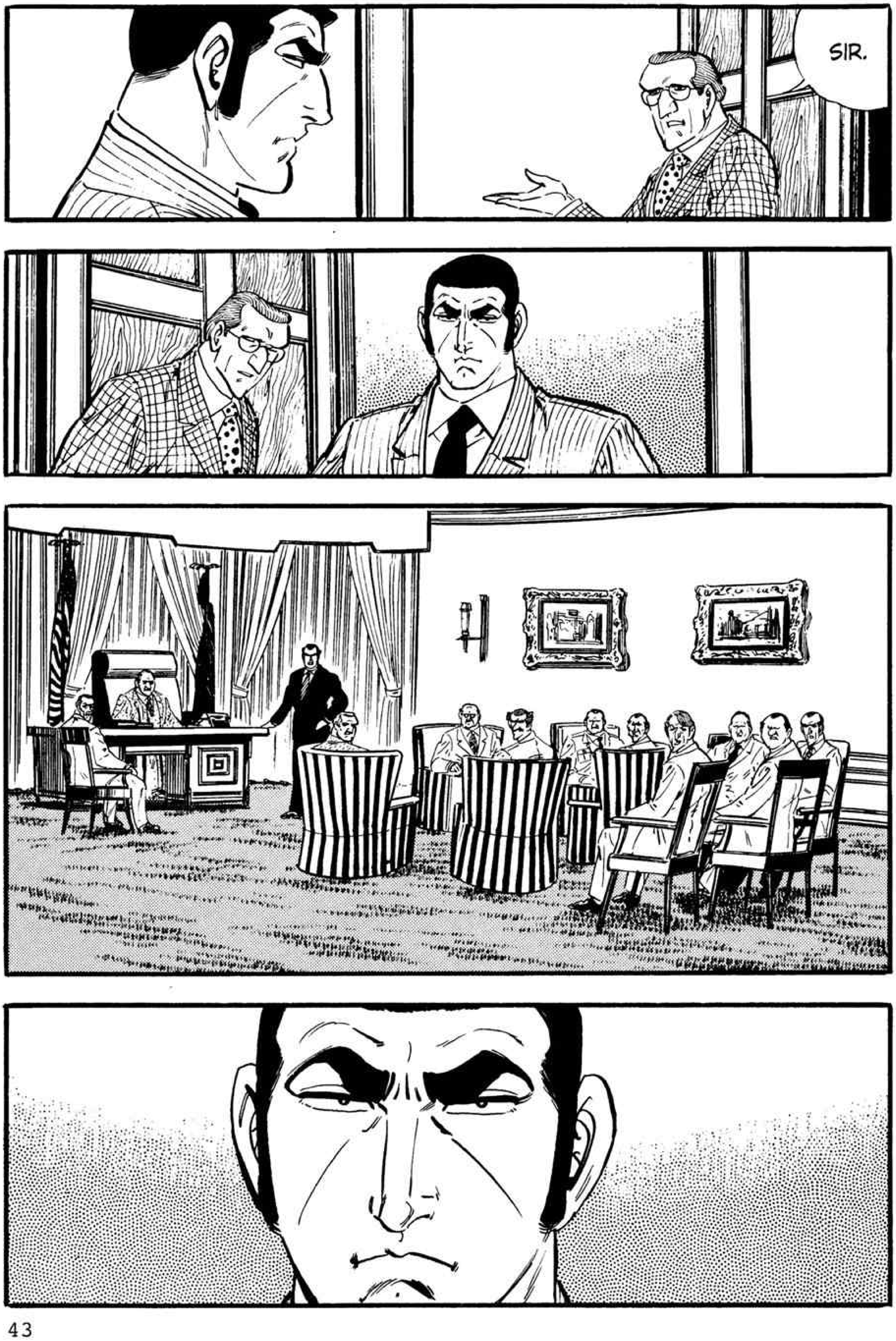

chak
SIR... HE'S BACK.
HUH ?
WHERE'S OUR GUEST, VERNON?
AH... THAT IS...
WE GOT INTO THE TERMINAL AT DULLES, AND...
...AND HE, *uh*, DIS-APPEARED.
FOR GOD'S SAKE, MR. PRESIDENT! WHAT COULD WE *EXPECT* OF SUCH A MAN?
THIS IDEA OF USING A HIRED KILLER ...!
......

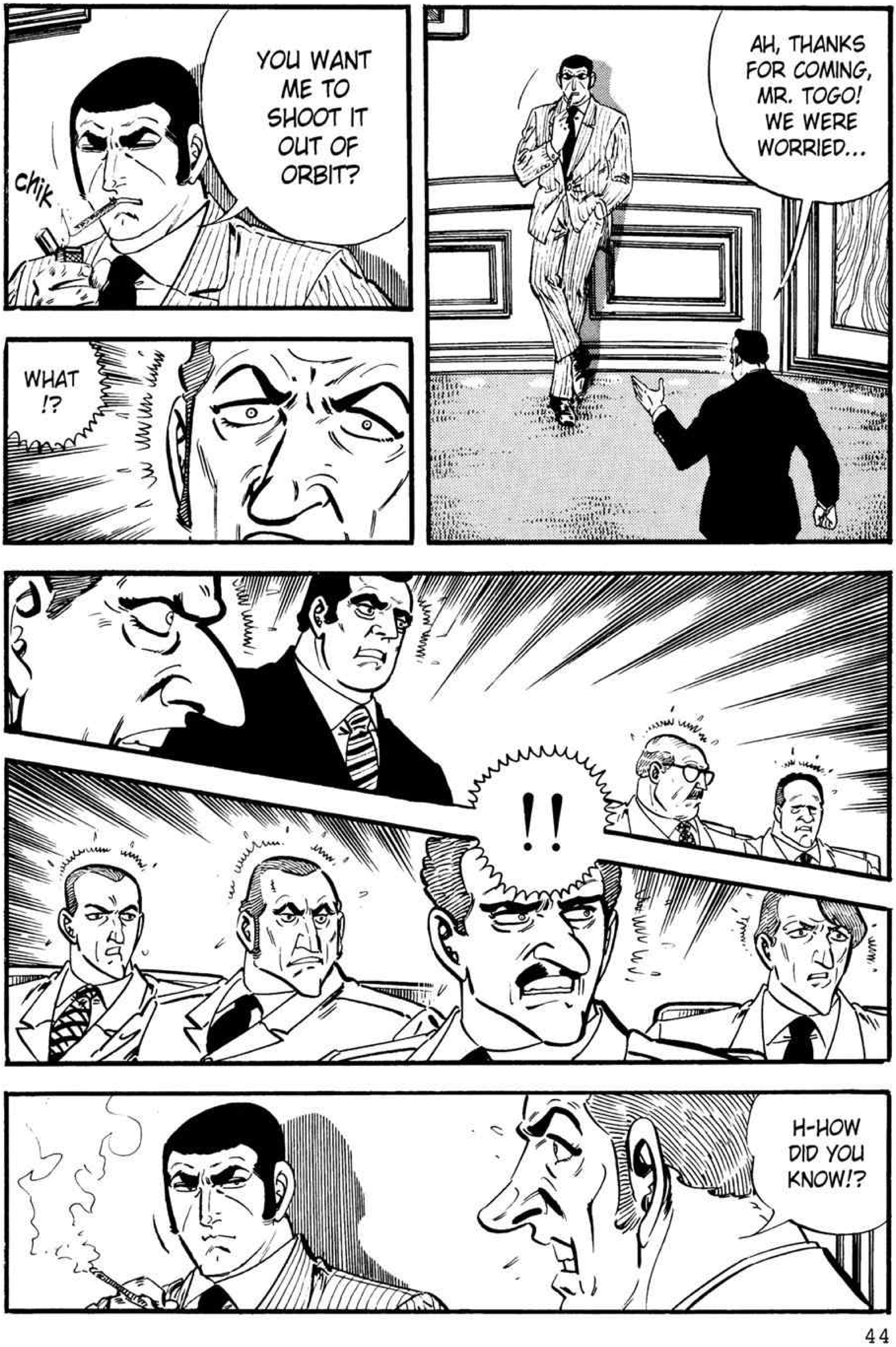

HE'S NO SIMPLE HIT MAN.
THIS TOGO'S CARRIED OUT AT LEAST A DOZEN SUCCESSFUL JOBS FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. THE CIA RATES HIM HIGHLY RELIABLE... AND THE CLINCHER IS THAT HE'S A QUALIFIED JET PILOT. NO ONE ELSE COMES CLOSE TO MEETING OUR REQUIREMENTS.
IT WOULD HELP, GENERAL, WERE YOU TO THINK OF HIM AS ONE OF YOUR...I DON'T KNOW... "SPECIAL-FORCES OPERATIVES"...
......
I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE IT, GENERAL... I'M NOT SAYING I'M HAPPY WITH THIS EITHER.
THEN, SIR!
THERE'S GOT TO BE ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE!

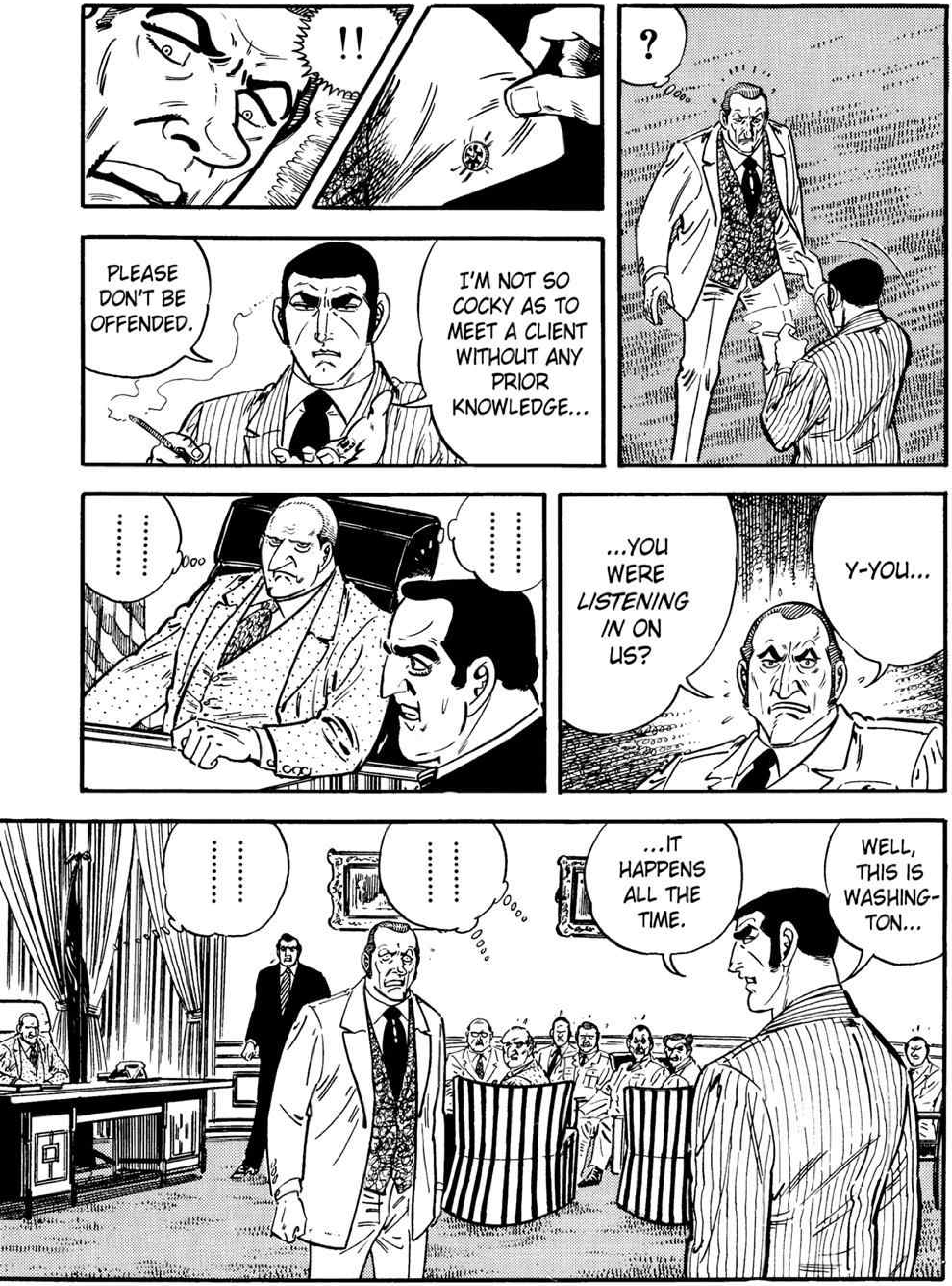

WE FLOATED THE IDEA OF A LAUNCH DELAY OR ORBITAL CHANGE TO THE SOVIETS ...
AND THEY POLITELY DECLINED. WE THINK THEY *KNOW* WE'VE GOT SOMETHING UP THERE.
THEY DON'T KNOW THE EXACT *PURPOSE* OF ALABASTER, BUT THEY MUST KNOW WE'VE TRANSMITTED SIGNALS TO IT... THEY'D LIKE TO TAKE A LOOK.
......
...A LOOK'S AS GOOD AS A TOUCH.
AND WE CAN'T EXACTLY TELL THEM THAT WITH THE ARS...

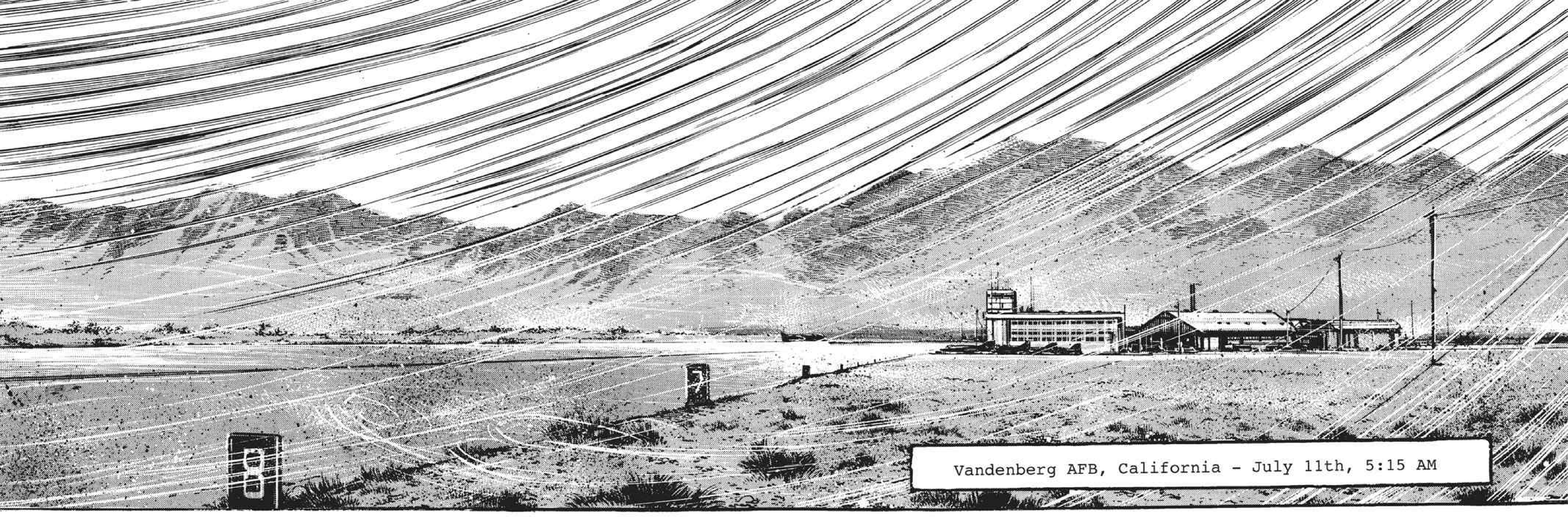

WE DON'T EVEN KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT THE ARS IS OPERATIONAL... DAMOCLES WAS GOING TO BE RETIRED NEXT YEAR ANYWAY!
AND EVEN IF THE RUSSIANS SPOT THE CAPSULE? WE DON'T HAVE TO ADMIT A THING!
GENERAL, ARE YOU WILLING TO GAMBLE A WAR ON THAT?
...NO.
WE'LL TELL THE RUSSIANS THE TRUTH IF WE HAVE NO CHOICE... IF THIS FAILS.
AS LONG AS WE HAVE A CHOICE, I WANT TO GIVE THIS PLAN A TRY. AND I WANT YOUR SUPPORT.
FIND HIM.
YES, SIR!
bbbzzzzzz
YES.
WHAT'S THAT?
WHAT?

MR. PRESIDENT... HE'S HERE.
WHO?
YOUR HIT MAN.
SEND HIM IN.

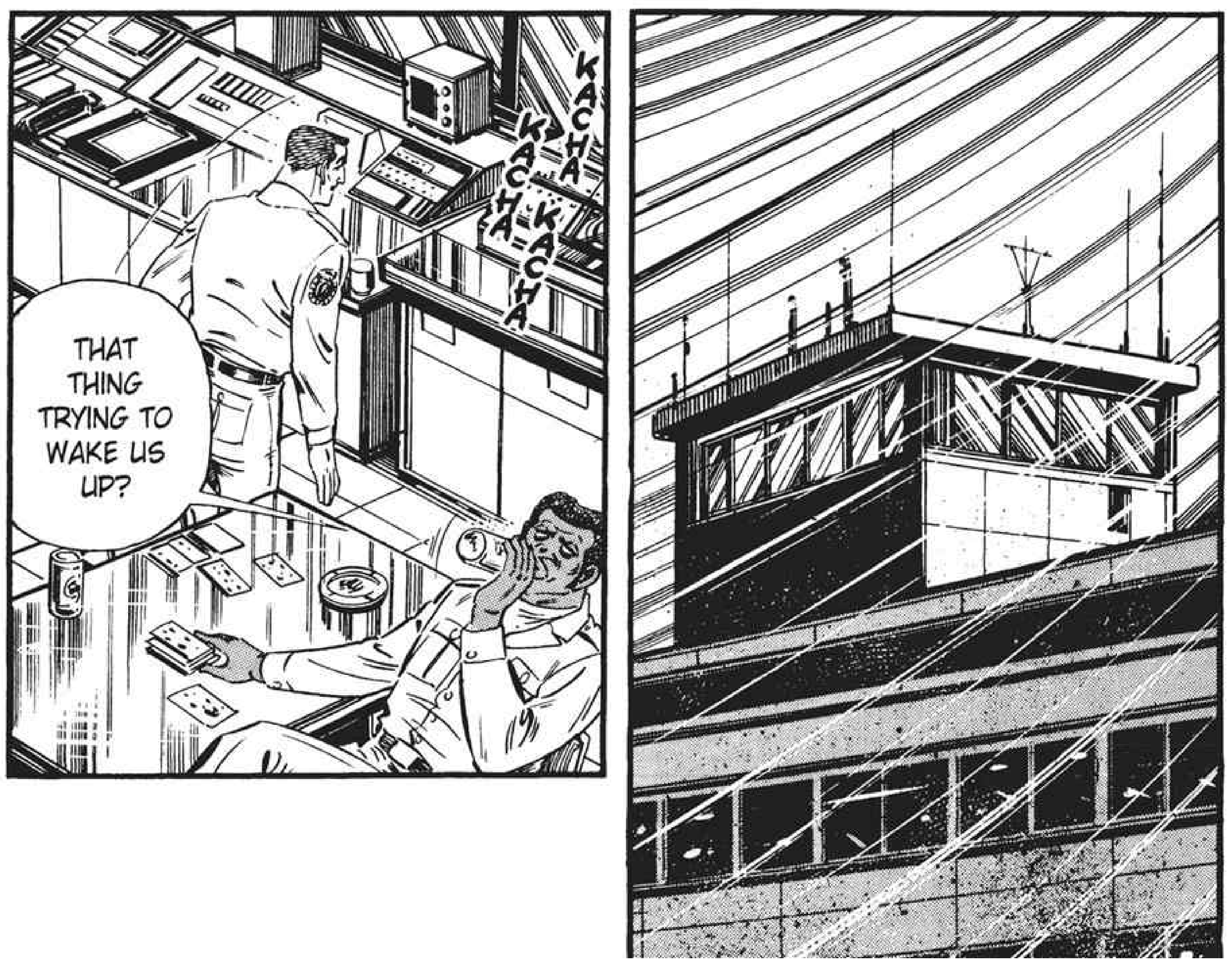

SIR.

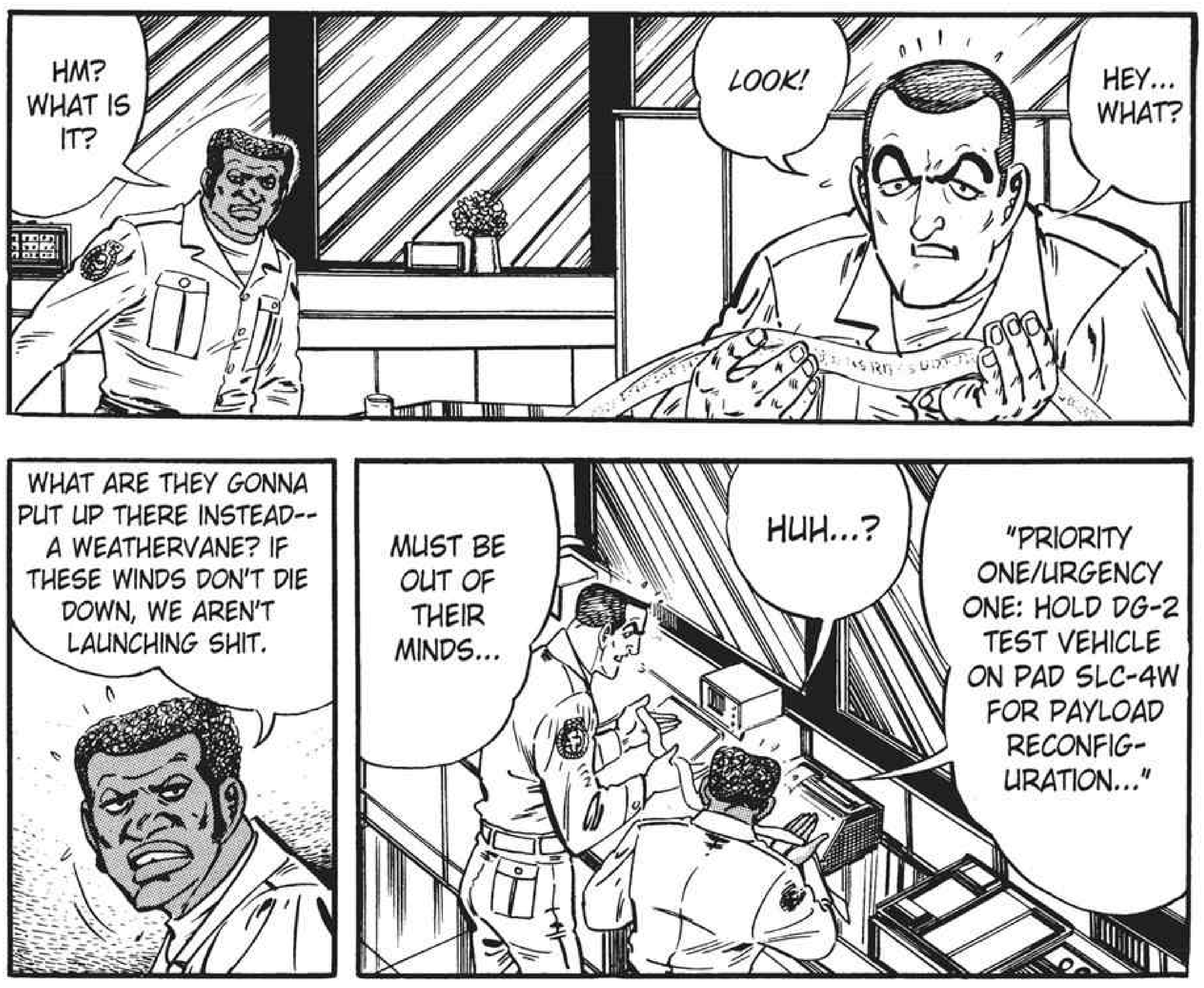

AH, THANKS FOR COMING, MR. TOGO! WE WERE WORRIED...
chik
YOU WANT ME TO SHOOT IT OUT OF ORBIT?
WHAT !?
!!
H-HOW DID YOU KNOW!?

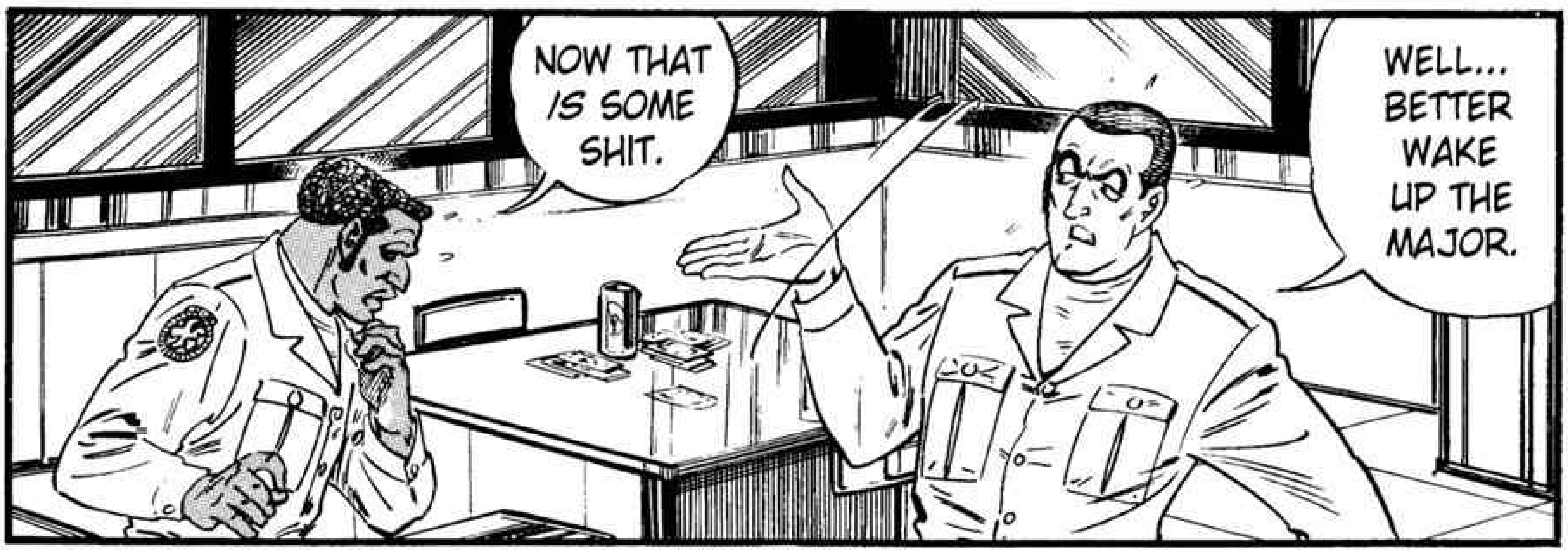

?
!!
I'M NOT SO COCKY AS TO MEET A CLIENT WITHOUT ANY PRIOR KNOWLEDGE...
PLEASE DON'T BE OFFENDED.
Y-YOU...
...YOU WERE *LISTENING IN* ON US?
......
......
WELL, THIS IS WASHINGTON...
...IT HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.
......
......

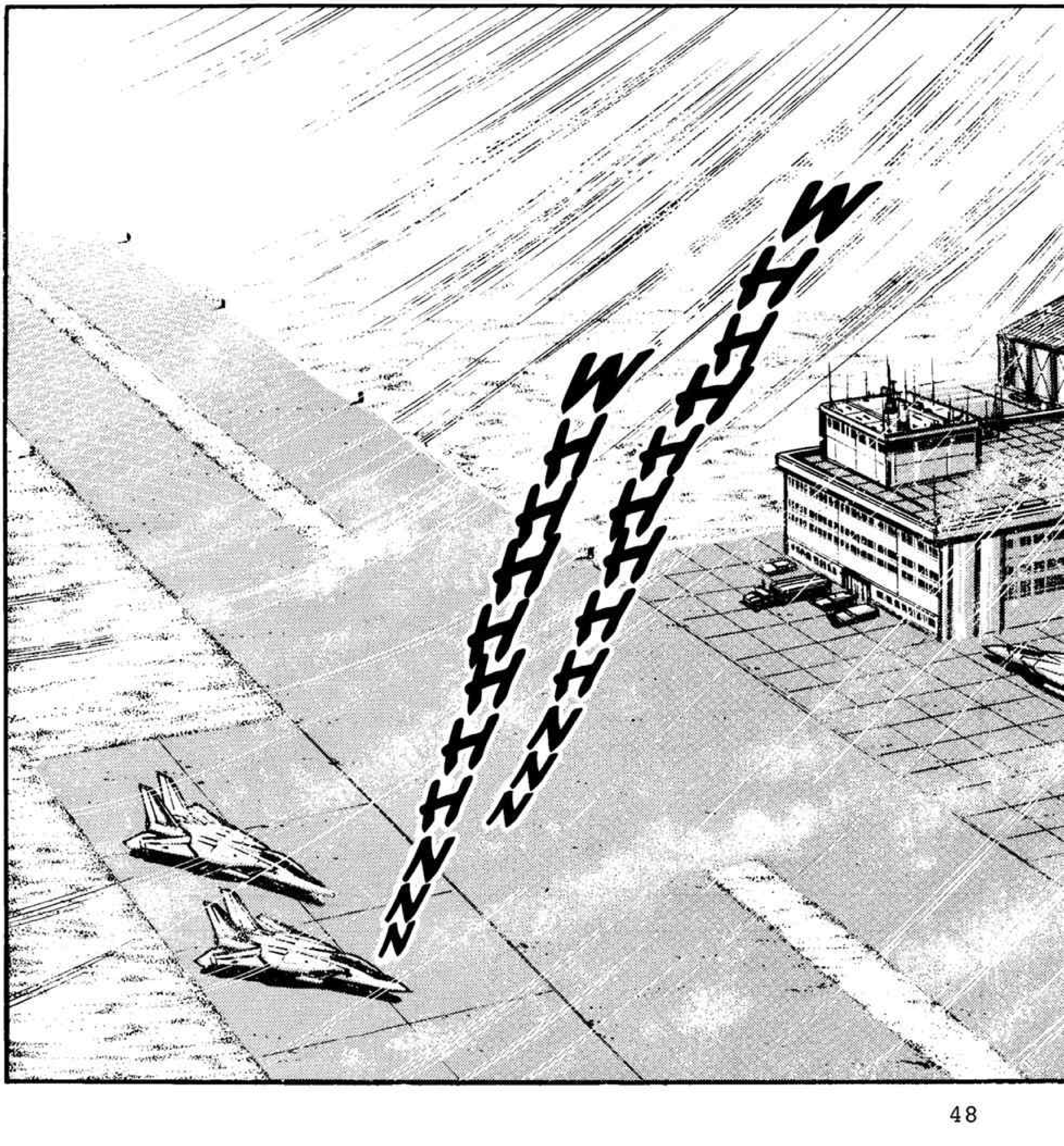

Vandenberg AFB, California - July 11th, 5:15 AM

PART 5 PRIORITY ONE

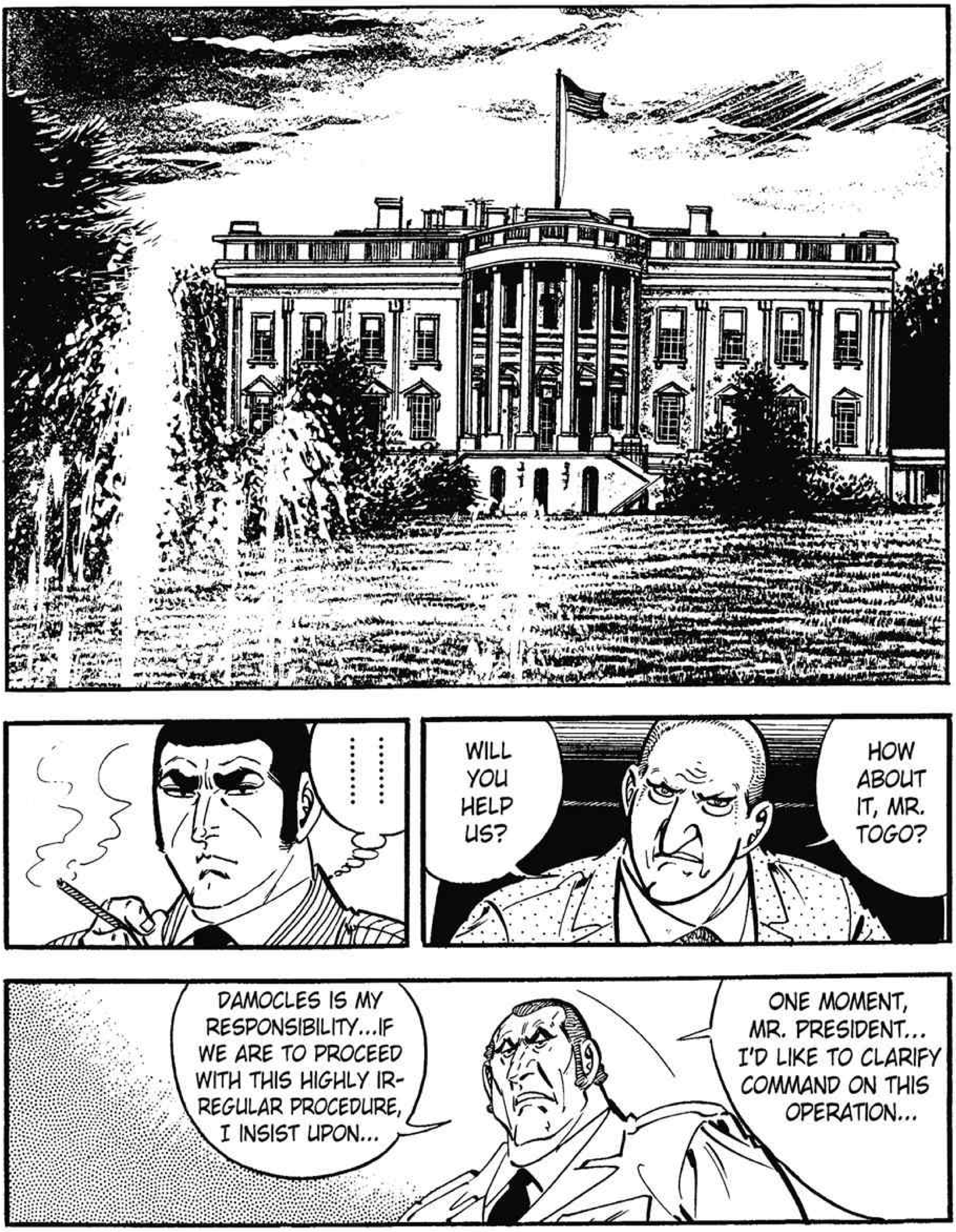

KACHA
KACHA
KACHA
THAT THING TRYING TO WAKE US UP?

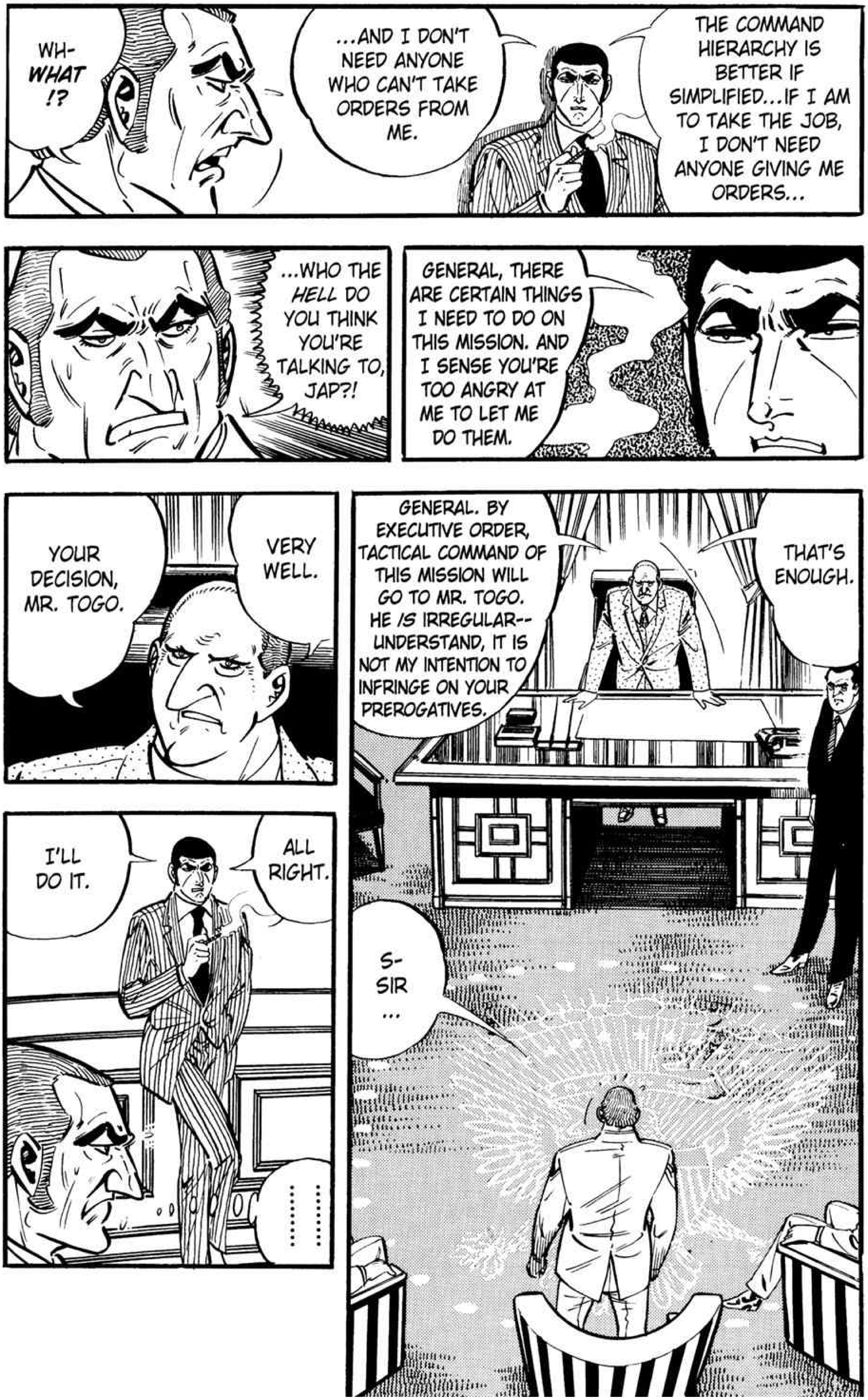

HEY... WHAT?
LOOK!
HM? WHAT IS IT?
"PRIORITY ONE/URGENCY ONE: HOLD DG-2 TEST VEHICLE ON PAD SLC-4W FOR PAYLOAD RECONFIGURATION..."
HUH...?
MUST BE OUT OF THEIR MINDS...
WHAT ARE THEY GONNA PUT UP THERE INSTEAD-- A WEATHERVANE? IF THESE WINDS DON'T DIE DOWN, WE AREN'T LAUNCHING SHIT.

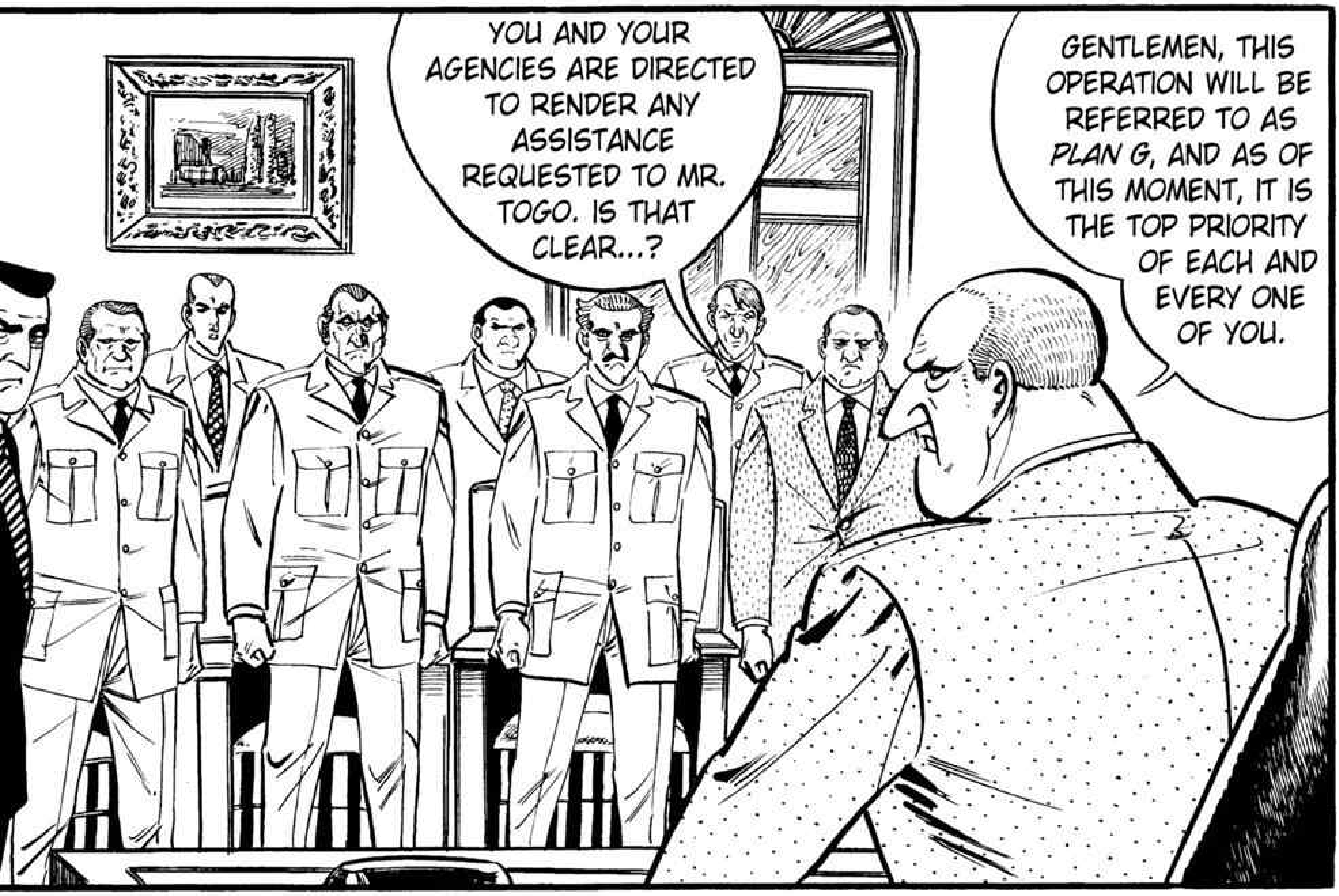

NOW THAT IS SOME SHIT.
WELL... BETTER WAKE UP THE MAJOR.

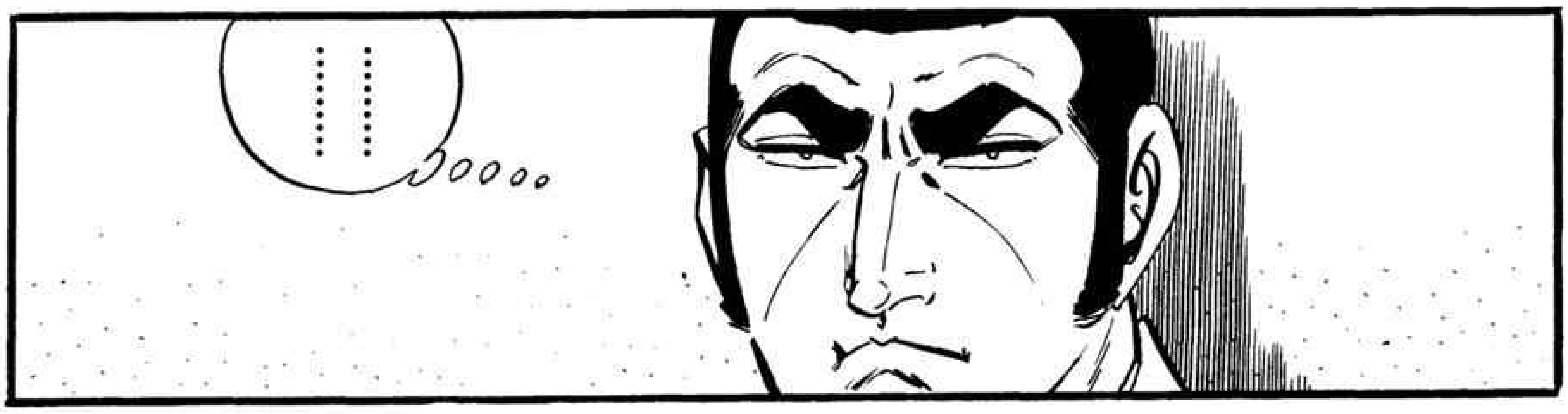

WHHHHHHHHHHHNNNN
WHHHHHHNNNN

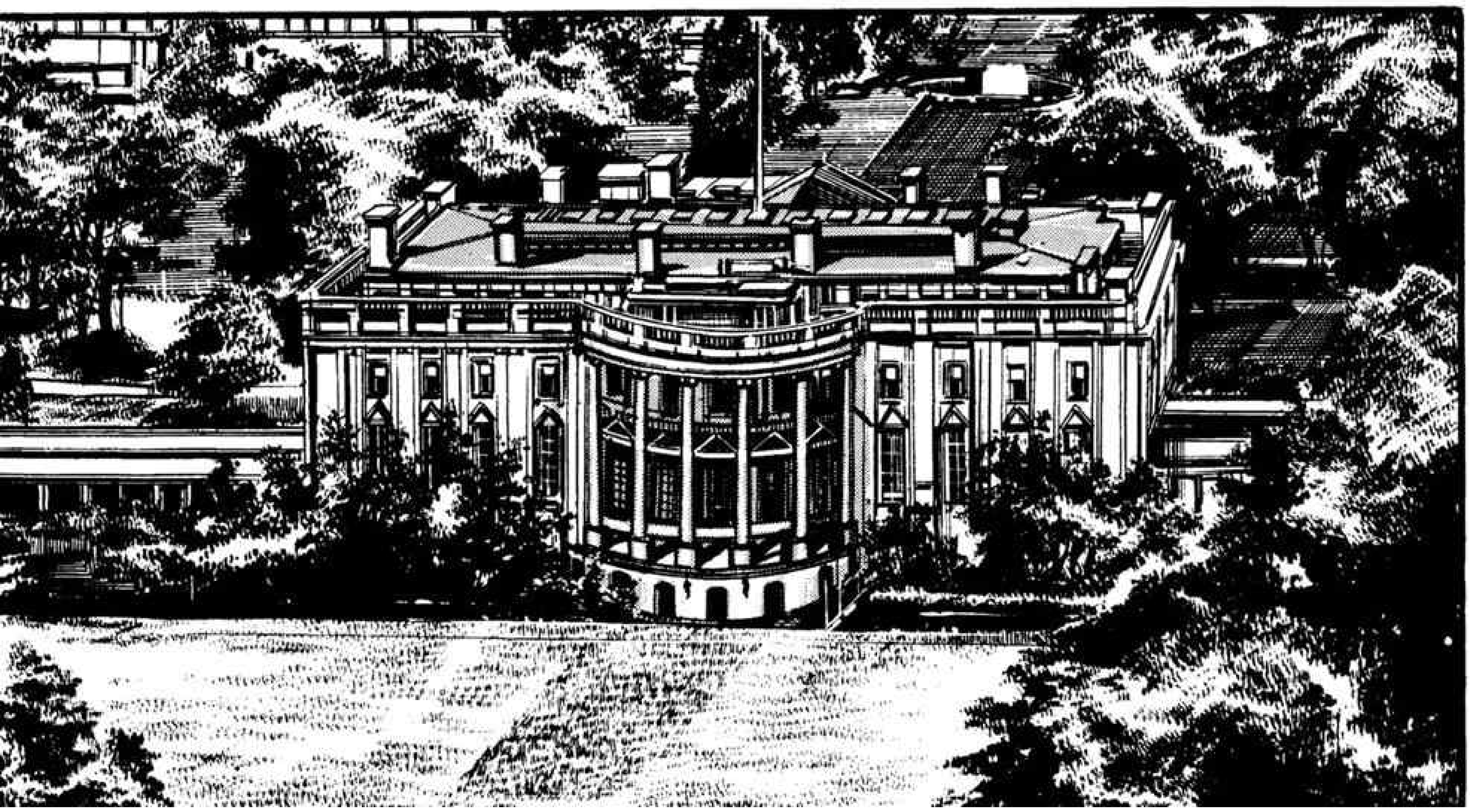
PART 6 EXECUTIVE DECISION


HOW ABOUT IT, MR. TOGO?
WILL YOU HELP US?
......
ONE MOMENT, MR. PRESIDENT... I'D LIKE TO CLARIFY COMMAND ON THIS OPERATION...
DAMOCLES IS MY RESPONSIBILITY...IF WE ARE TO PROCEED WITH THIS HIGHLY IRREGULAR PROCEDURE, I INSIST UPON...


THE COMMAND HIERARCHY IS BETTER IF SIMPLIFIED...IF I AM TO TAKE THE JOB, I DON'T NEED ANYONE GIVING ME ORDERS...
...AND I DON'T NEED ANYONE WHO CAN'T TAKE ORDERS FROM ME.
WH- *WHAT* !?
GENERAL, THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS I NEED TO DO ON THIS MISSION. AND I SENSE YOU'RE TOO ANGRY AT ME TO LET ME DO THEM.
...WHO THE *HELL* DO YOU THINK YOU'RE TALKING TO, JAP?!
THAT'S ENOUGH.
GENERAL. BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, TACTICAL COMMAND OF THIS MISSION WILL GO TO MR. TOGO. HE *IS* IRREGULAR-- UNDERSTAND, IT IS NOT MY INTENTION TO INFRINGE ON YOUR PREROGATIVES.
S- SIR ...
VERY WELL.
YOUR DECISION, MR. TOGO.
ALL RIGHT.
I'LL DO IT.
......

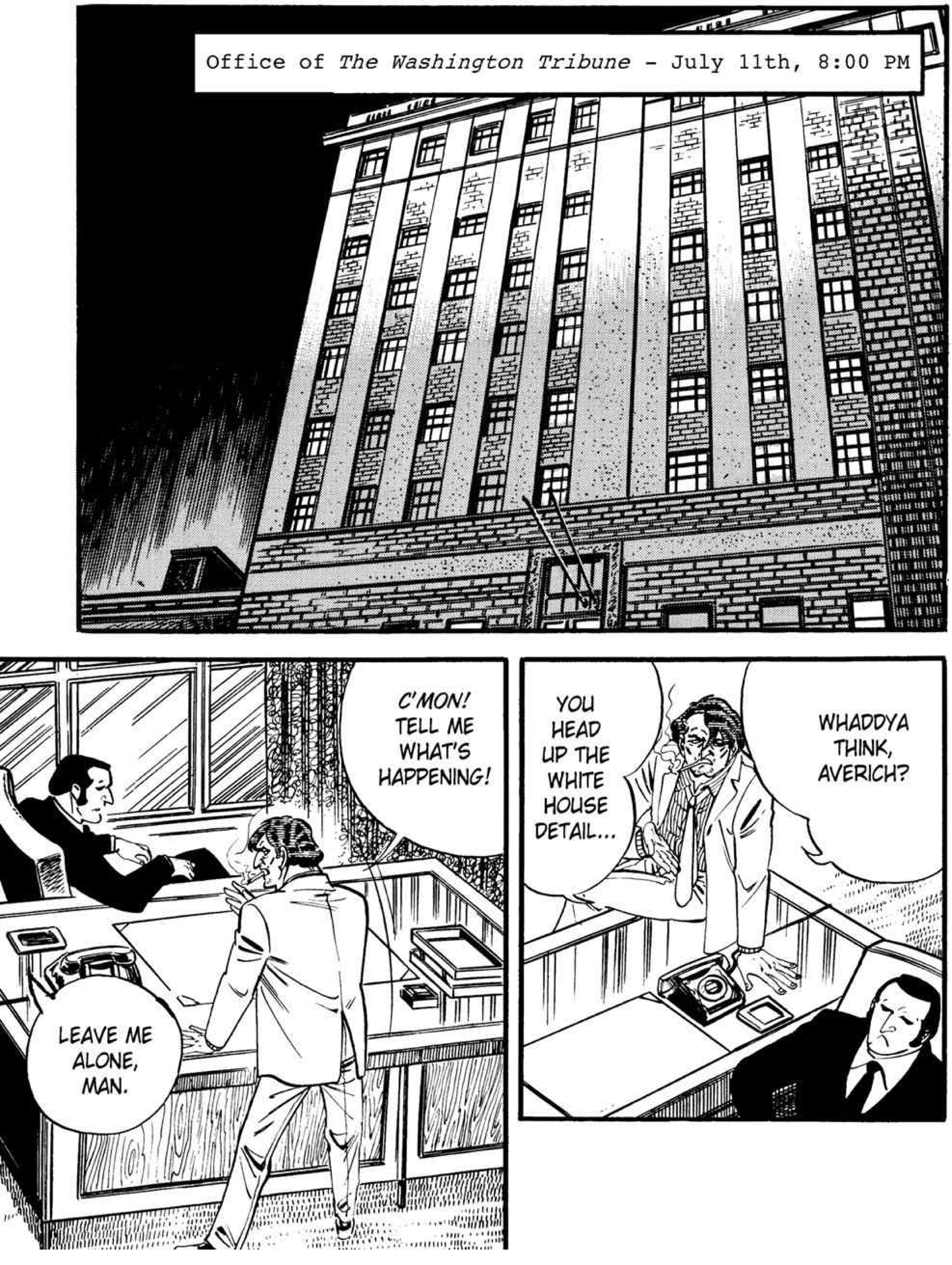

GENTLEMEN, THIS OPERATION WILL BE REFERRED TO AS *PLAN G*, AND AS OF THIS MOMENT, IT IS THE TOP PRIORITY OF EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.
YOU AND YOUR AGENCIES ARE DIRECTED TO RENDER ANY ASSISTANCE REQUESTED TO MR. TOGO. IS THAT CLEAR...?

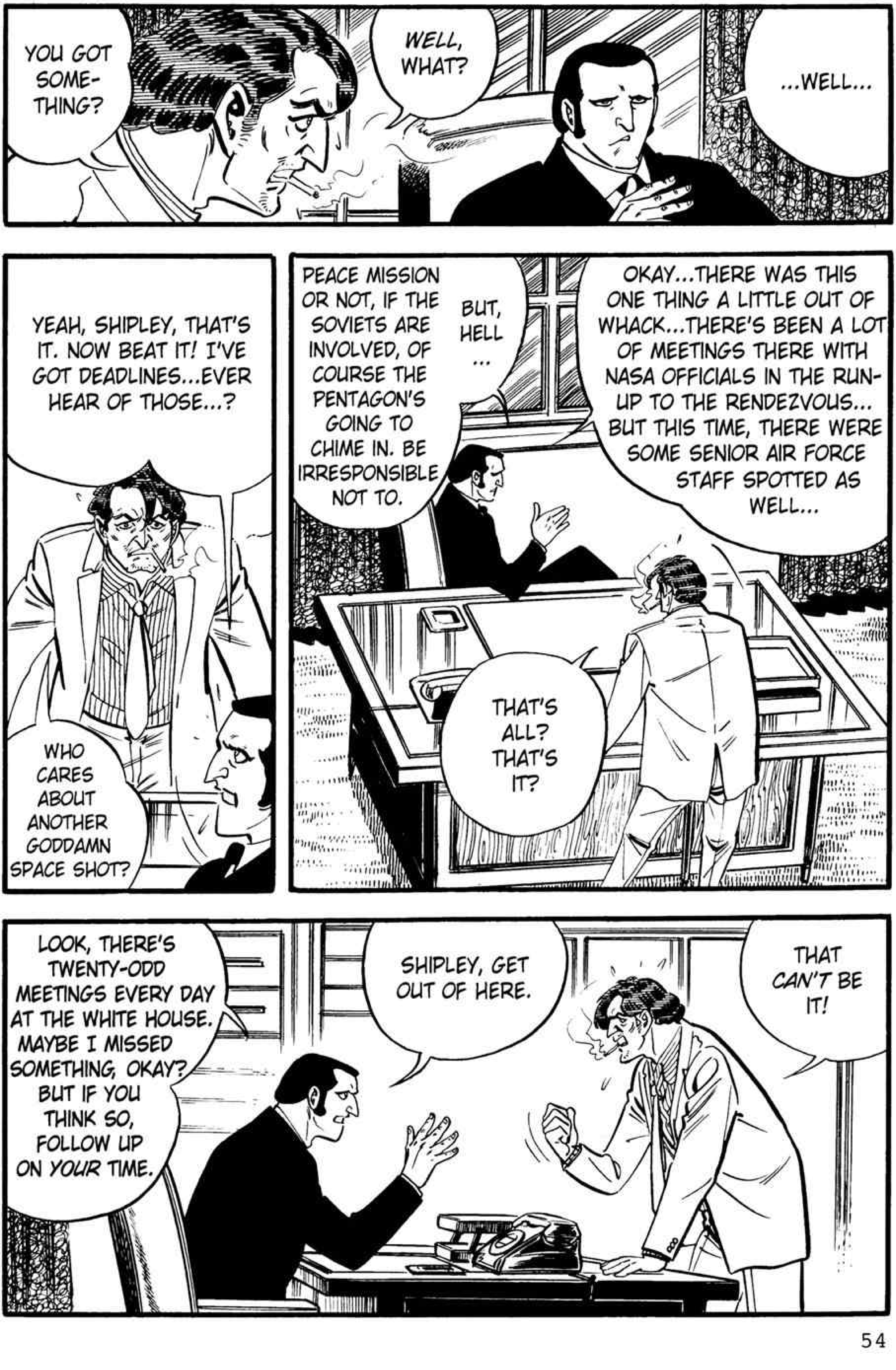

……

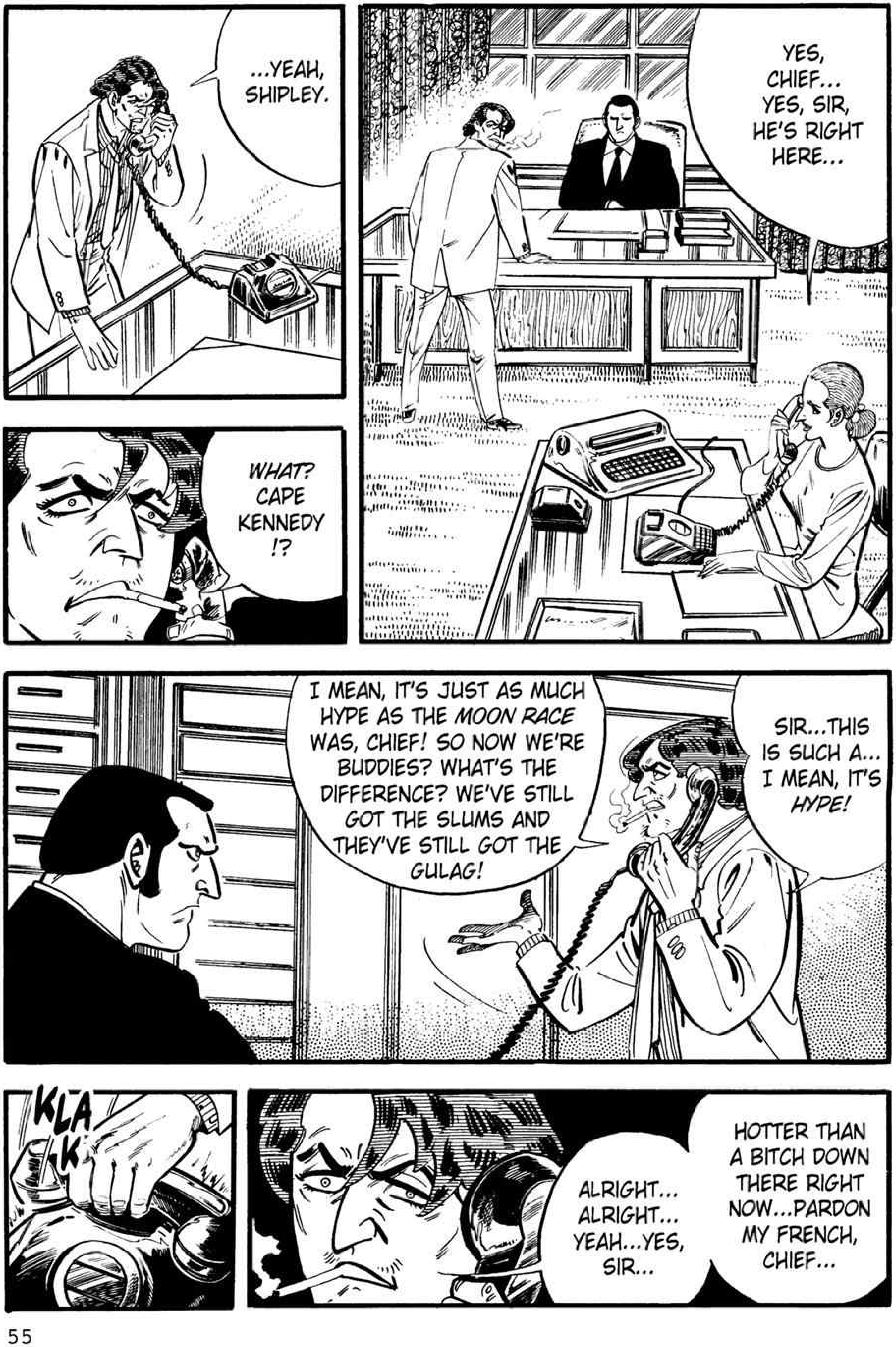


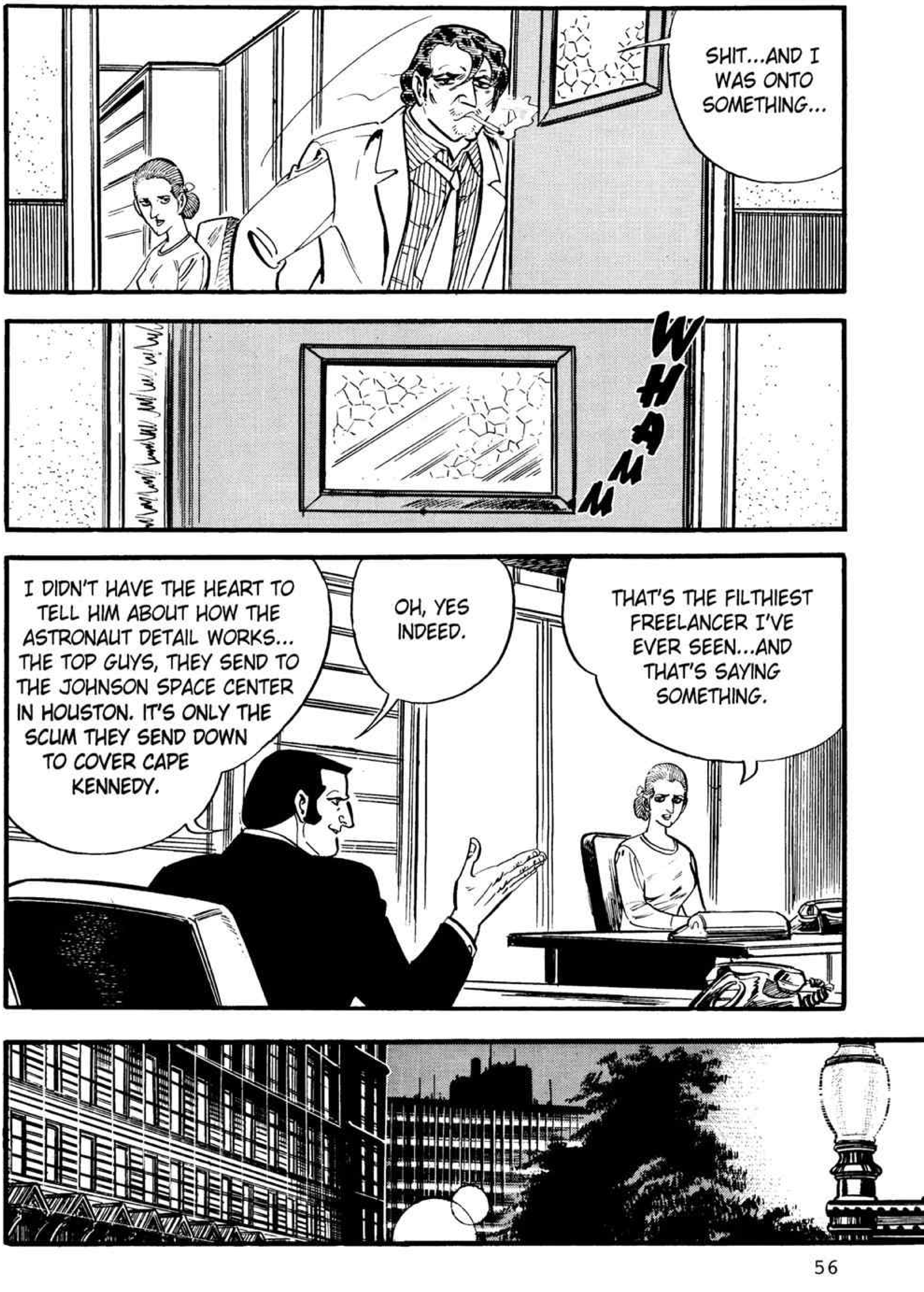
MR. PRESIDENT, IT IS MY DUTY TO TELL YOU THIS IS A SEVERELY MISGUIDED IDEA…AN *ASSASSIN*, SIR? I HAVE A DOZEN TOP PILOTS WHO WOULD VOLUNTEER FOR THIS MISSION, MEN WITH PROPER TRAINING…
TO DISGRACE OUR DEAD ASTRONAUTS BY SENDING UP…
…SENDING UP SOME YELLOW…
…GENERAL FERGUSON, YOU…WILL BE TEMPORARILY REASSIGNED TO OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DURATION OF PLAN G.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR OPINIONS HERE TODAY.
THAT'S ALL.
BUT, SIR, I…
THAT IS ALL, GENERAL.
……

PART 7 FOURTH ESTATE

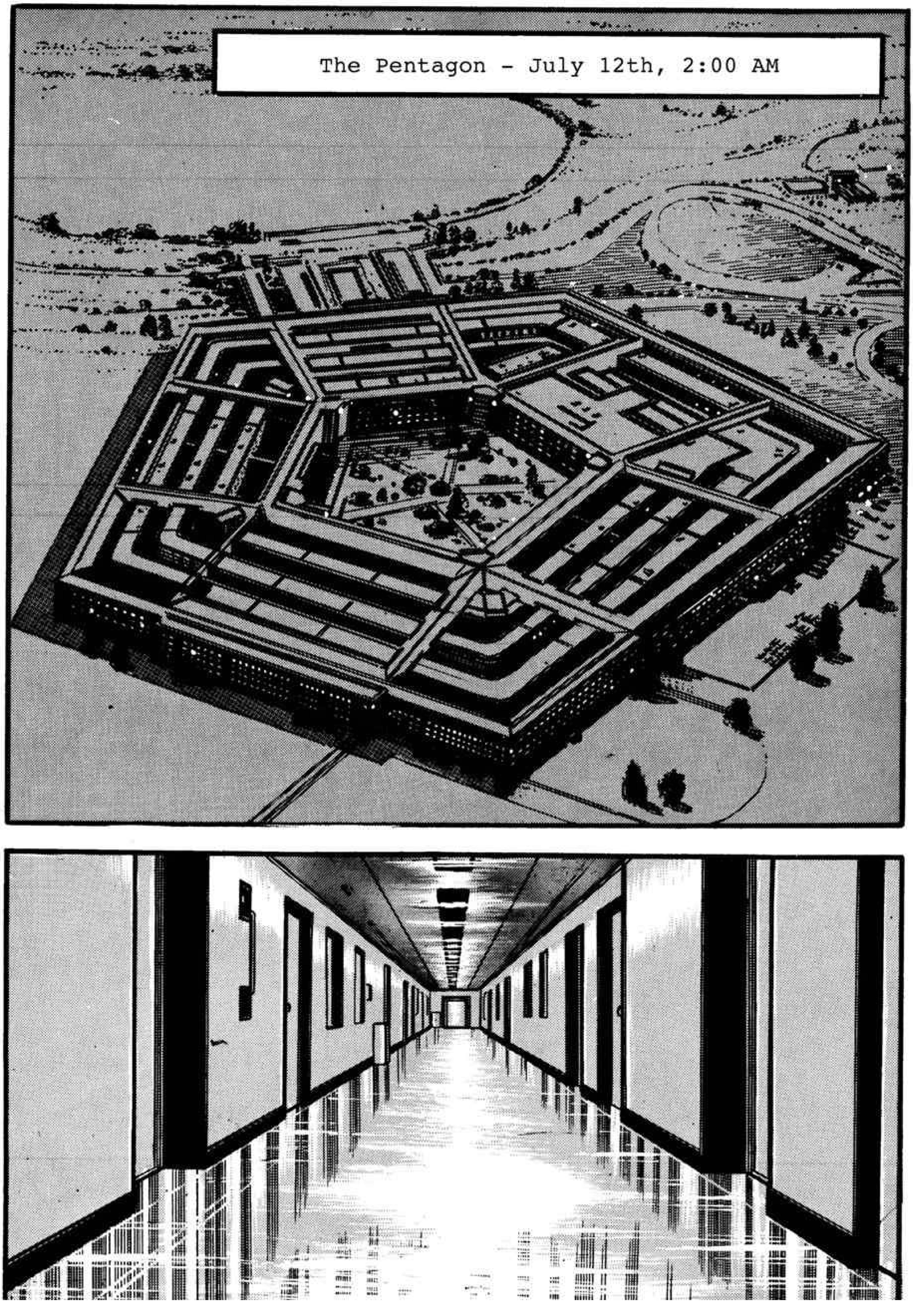

Office of *The Washington Tribune* - July 11th, 8:00 PM
C'MON! TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENING!
LEAVE ME ALONE, MAN.
YOU HEAD UP THE WHITE HOUSE DETAIL...
WHADDYA THINK, AVERICH?

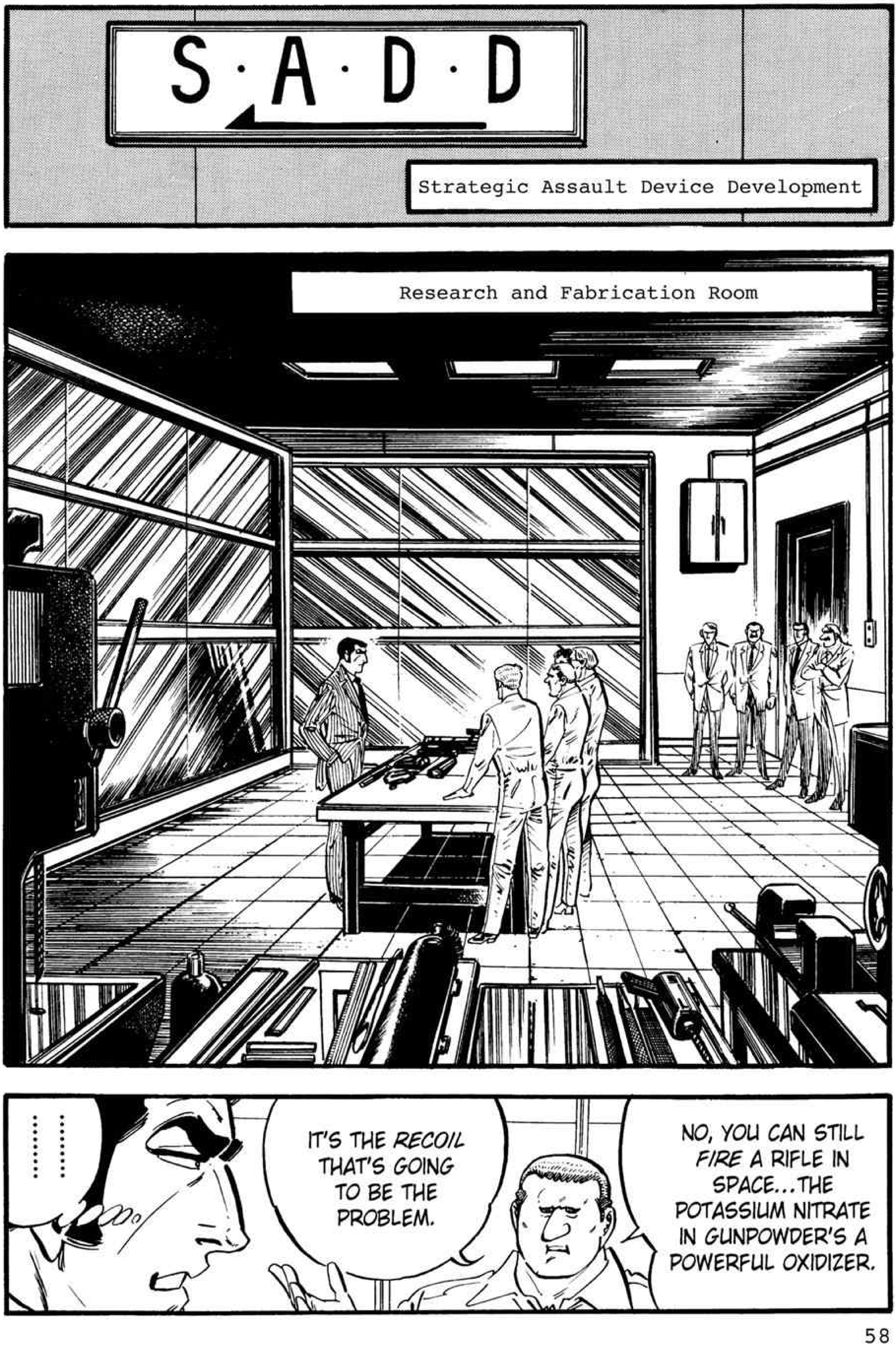

YOU GOT SOMETHING?
WELL, WHAT?
...WELL...
OKAY...THERE WAS THIS ONE THING A LITTLE OUT OF WHACK...THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF MEETINGS THERE WITH NASA OFFICIALS IN THE RUN-UP TO THE RENDEZVOUS... BUT THIS TIME, THERE WERE SOME SENIOR AIR FORCE STAFF SPOTTED AS WELL...
THAT'S ALL? THAT'S IT?
BUT, HELL...
PEACE MISSION OR NOT, IF THE SOVIETS ARE INVOLVED, OF COURSE THE PENTAGON'S GOING TO CHIME IN. BE IRRESPONSIBLE NOT TO.
WHO CARES ABOUT ANOTHER GODDAMN SPACE SHOT?
YEAH, SHIPLEY, THAT'S IT. NOW BEAT IT! I'VE GOT DEADLINES...EVER HEAR OF THOSE...?
THAT *CAN'T* BE IT!
SHIPLEY, GET OUT OF HERE.
LOOK, THERE'S TWENTY-ODD MEETINGS EVERY DAY AT THE WHITE HOUSE. MAYBE I MISSED SOMETHING, OKAY? BUT IF YOU THINK SO, FOLLOW UP ON *YOUR* TIME.

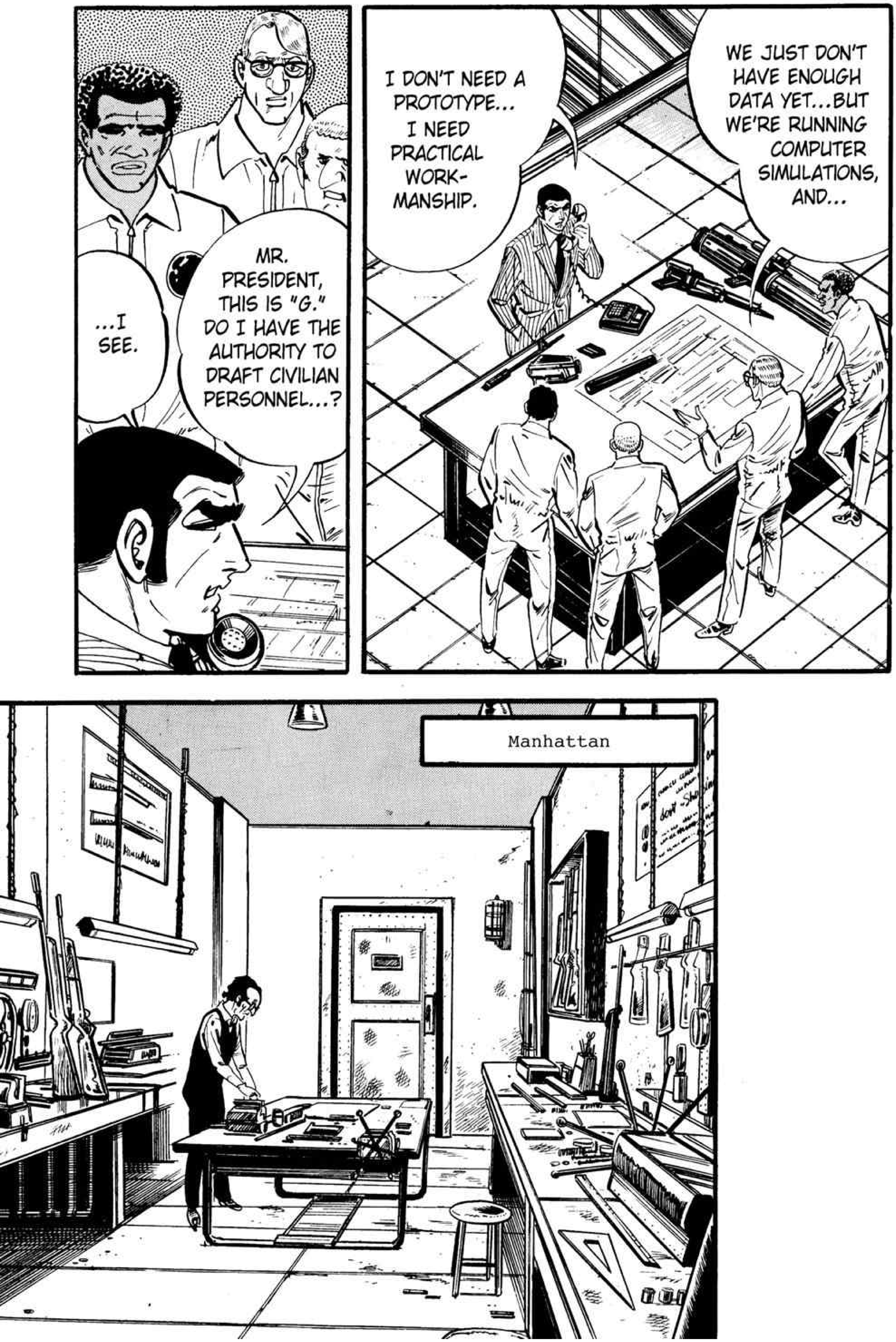

YES, CHIEF... YES, SIR, HE'S RIGHT HERE...
...YEAH, SHIPLEY.
WHAT? CAPE KENNEDY !?
SIR...THIS IS SUCH A... I MEAN, IT'S *HYPE!*
I MEAN, IT'S JUST AS MUCH HYPE AS THE *MOON RACE* WAS, CHIEF! SO NOW WE'RE BUDDIES? WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? WE'VE STILL GOT THE SLUMS AND THEY'VE STILL GOT THE GULAG!
HOTTER THAN A BITCH DOWN THERE RIGHT NOW...PARDON MY FRENCH, CHIEF...
ALRIGHT... ALRIGHT... YEAH...YES, SIR...
KLAK

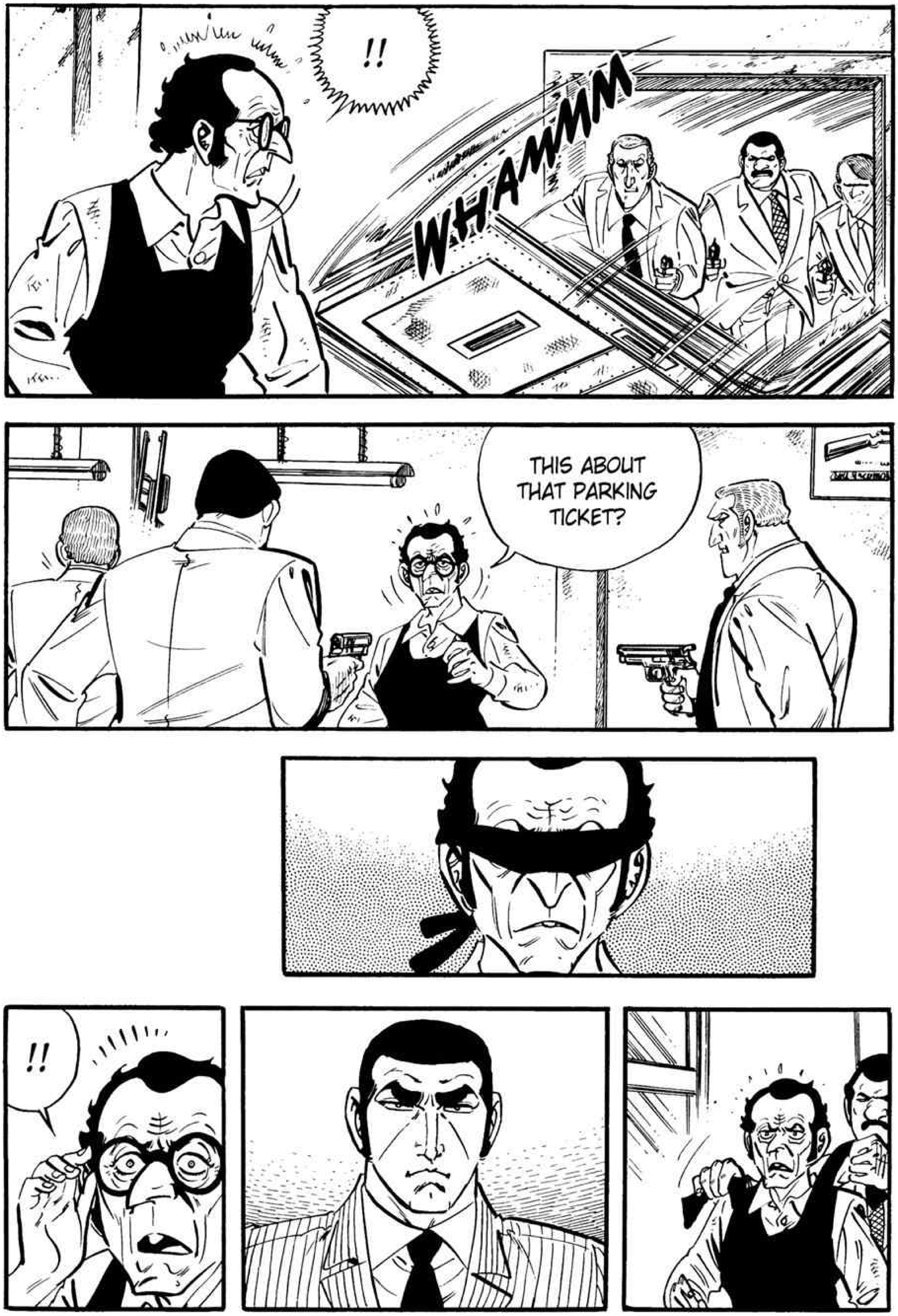

SHIT...AND I WAS ONTO SOMETHING...
WHAMM
THAT'S THE FILTHIEST FREELANCER I'VE EVER SEEN...AND THAT'S SAYING SOMETHING.
OH, YES INDEED.
I DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO TELL HIM ABOUT HOW THE ASTRONAUT DETAIL WORKS... THE TOP GUYS, THEY SEND TO THE JOHNSON SPACE CENTER IN HOUSTON. IT'S ONLY THE SCUM THEY SEND DOWN TO COVER CAPE KENNEDY.

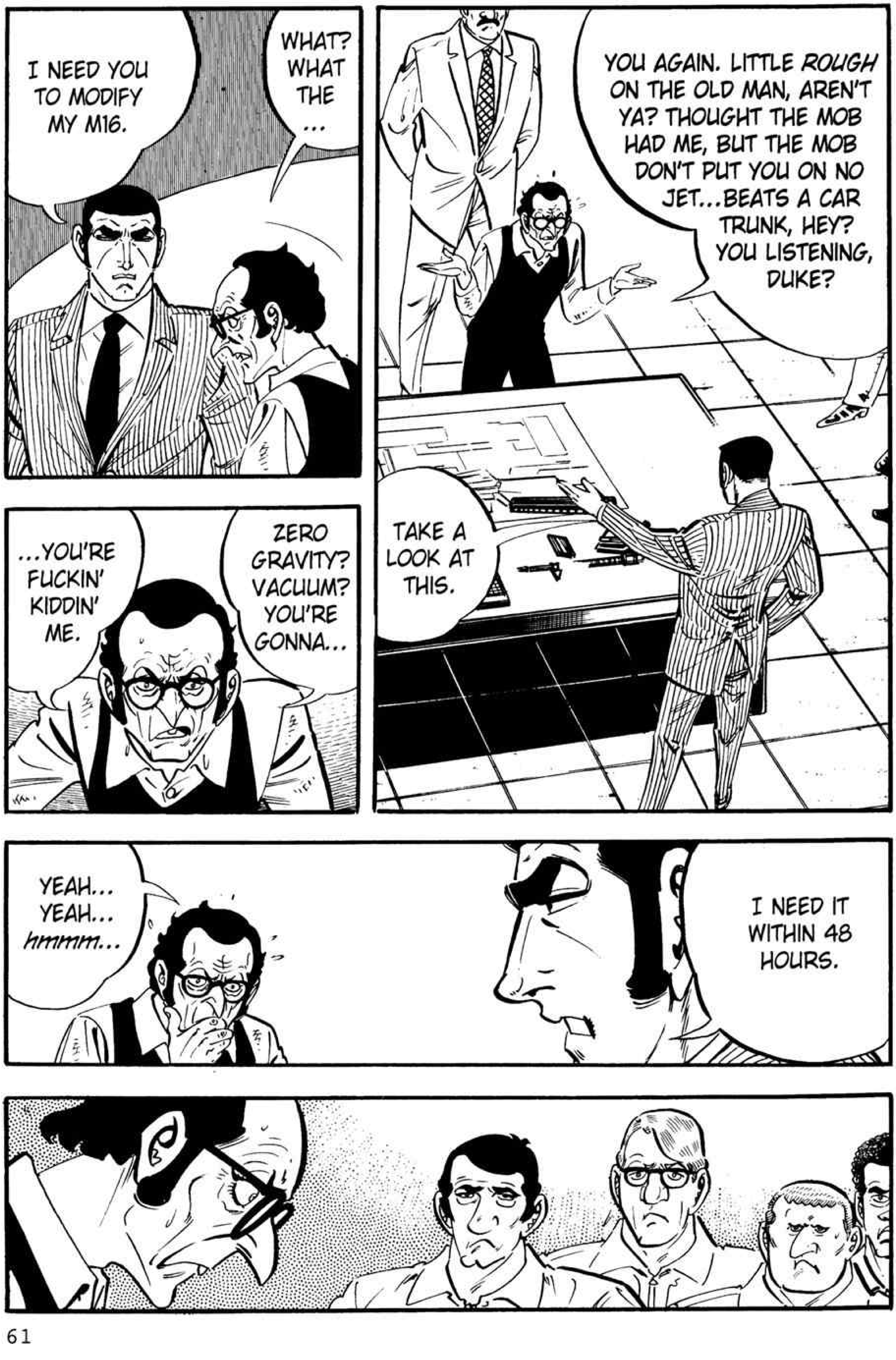
PART 8 GUEST PERSONNEL

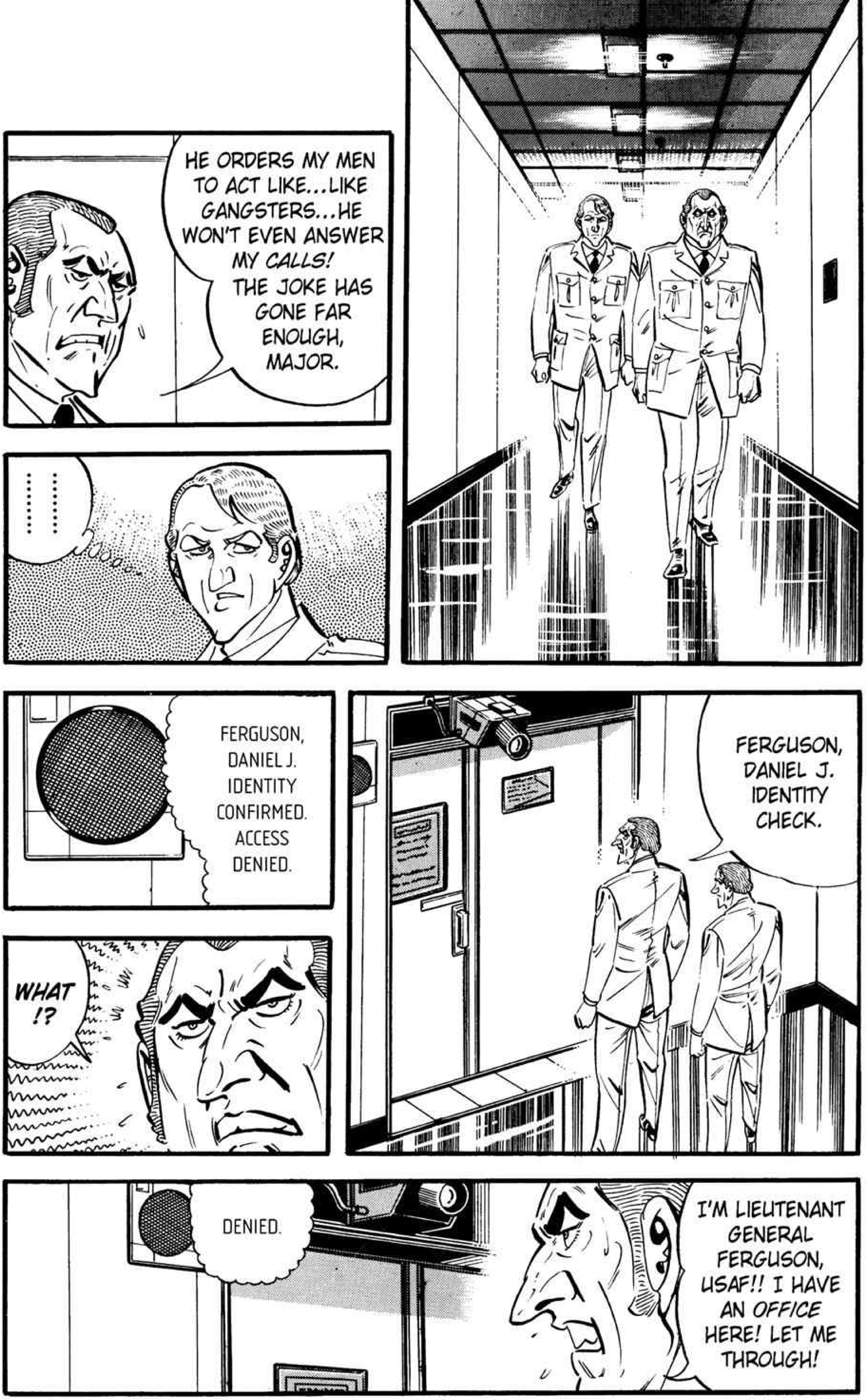

The Pentagon - July 12th, 2:00 AM


S·A·D·D
Strategic Assault Device Development
Research and Fabrication Room
NO, YOU CAN STILL *FIRE* A RIFLE IN SPACE...THE POTASSIUM NITRATE IN GUNPOWDER'S A POWERFUL OXIDIZER.
IT'S THE *RECOIL* THAT'S GOING TO BE THE PROBLEM.
......


WE JUST DON'T HAVE ENOUGH DATA YET...BUT WE'RE RUNNING COMPUTER SIMULATIONS, AND...
I DON'T NEED A PROTOTYPE... I NEED PRACTICAL WORKMANSHIP.
MR. PRESIDENT, THIS IS "G." DO I HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO DRAFT CIVILIAN PERSONNEL...?
...I SEE.
Manhattan

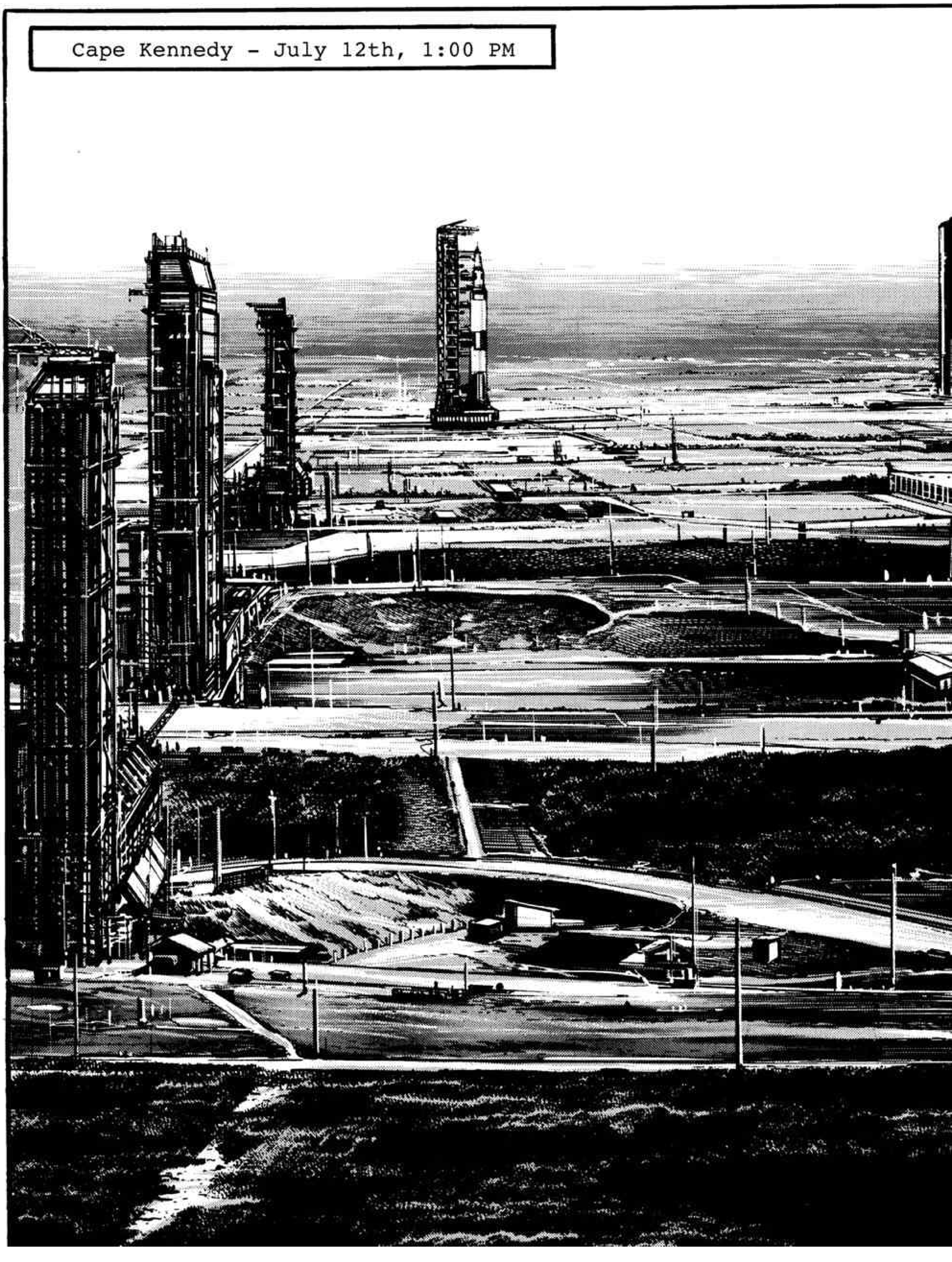
!!
WHAMMM
THIS ABOUT THAT PARKING TICKET?
!!


YOU AGAIN. LITTLE *ROUGH* ON THE OLD MAN, AREN'T YA? THOUGHT THE MOB HAD ME, BUT THE MOB DON'T PUT YOU ON NO JET...BEATS A CAR TRUNK, HEY? YOU LISTENING, DUKE?
WHAT? WHAT THE ...
I NEED YOU TO MODIFY MY M16.
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
ZERO GRAVITY? VACUUM? YOU'RE GONNA...
...YOU'RE FUCKIN' KIDDIN' ME.
I NEED IT WITHIN 48 HOURS.
YEAH... YEAH... *hmmm...*

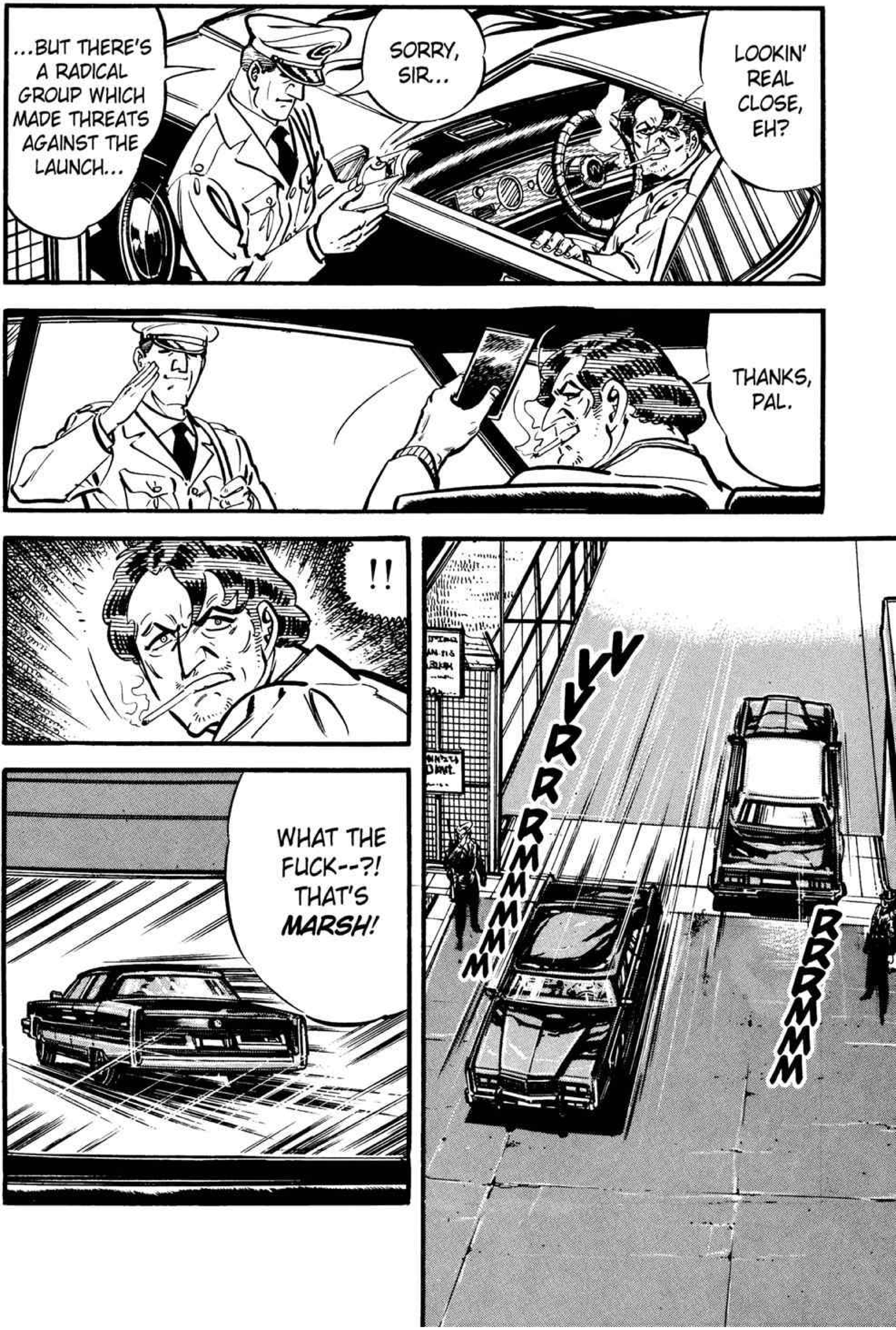

HE ORDERS MY MEN TO ACT LIKE…LIKE GANGSTERS…HE WON'T EVEN ANSWER MY *CALLS!* THE JOKE HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH, MAJOR.
……
FERGUSON, DANIEL J. IDENTITY CHECK.
FERGUSON, DANIEL J. IDENTITY CONFIRMED. ACCESS DENIED.
WHAT !?
I'M LIEUTENANT GENERAL FERGUSON, USAF!! I HAVE AN *OFFICE* HERE! LET ME THROUGH!
DENIED.

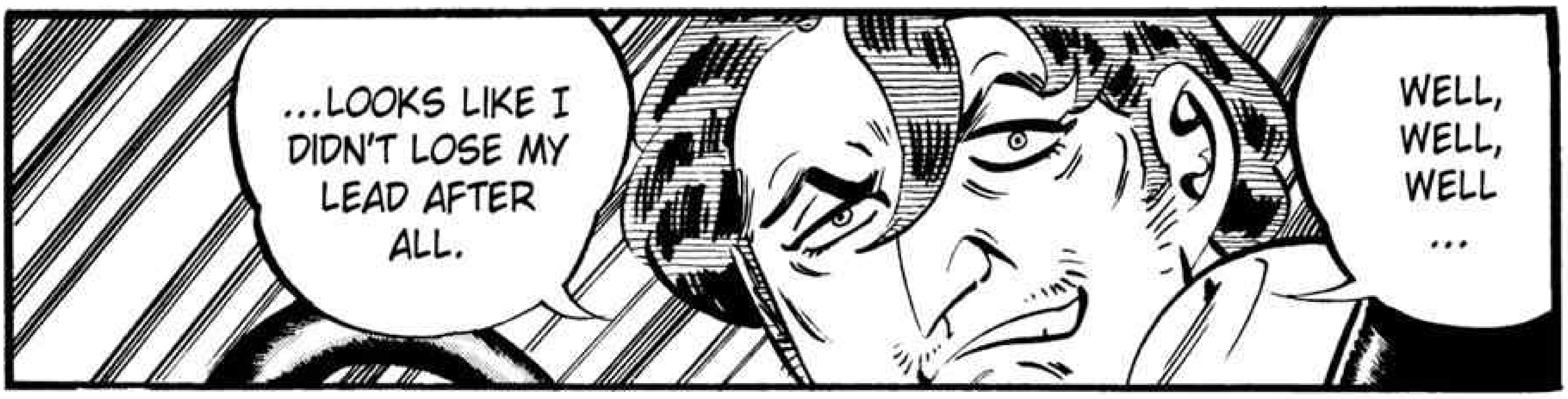
OVERRIDE... CODE WINTER GARDEN.
DENIED.
THE BASTARD... THEY...THEY TOLD HIM MY SECURITY CODES, MAJOR...A GODDAMN BUSHWHACKING JAP SNIPER, THEY TOLD HIM...
SIR... LET'S TRY CALLING ...
NO, MAJOR. NOBODY WE CAN CALL ON ANY MORE.
IT'S TIME TO GET BACK IN THE FIELD.
......

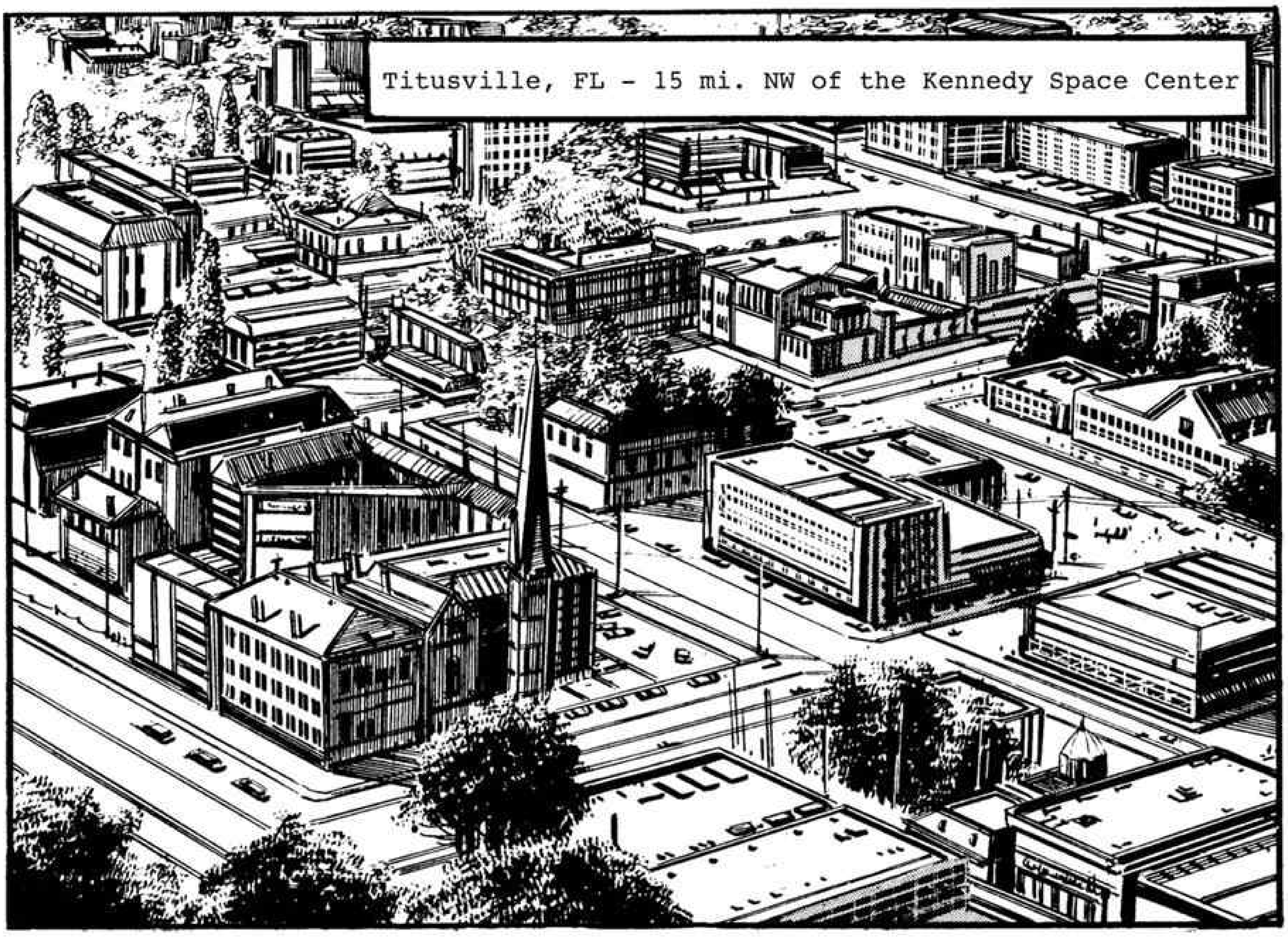
PART 9 BLACK BUDGET

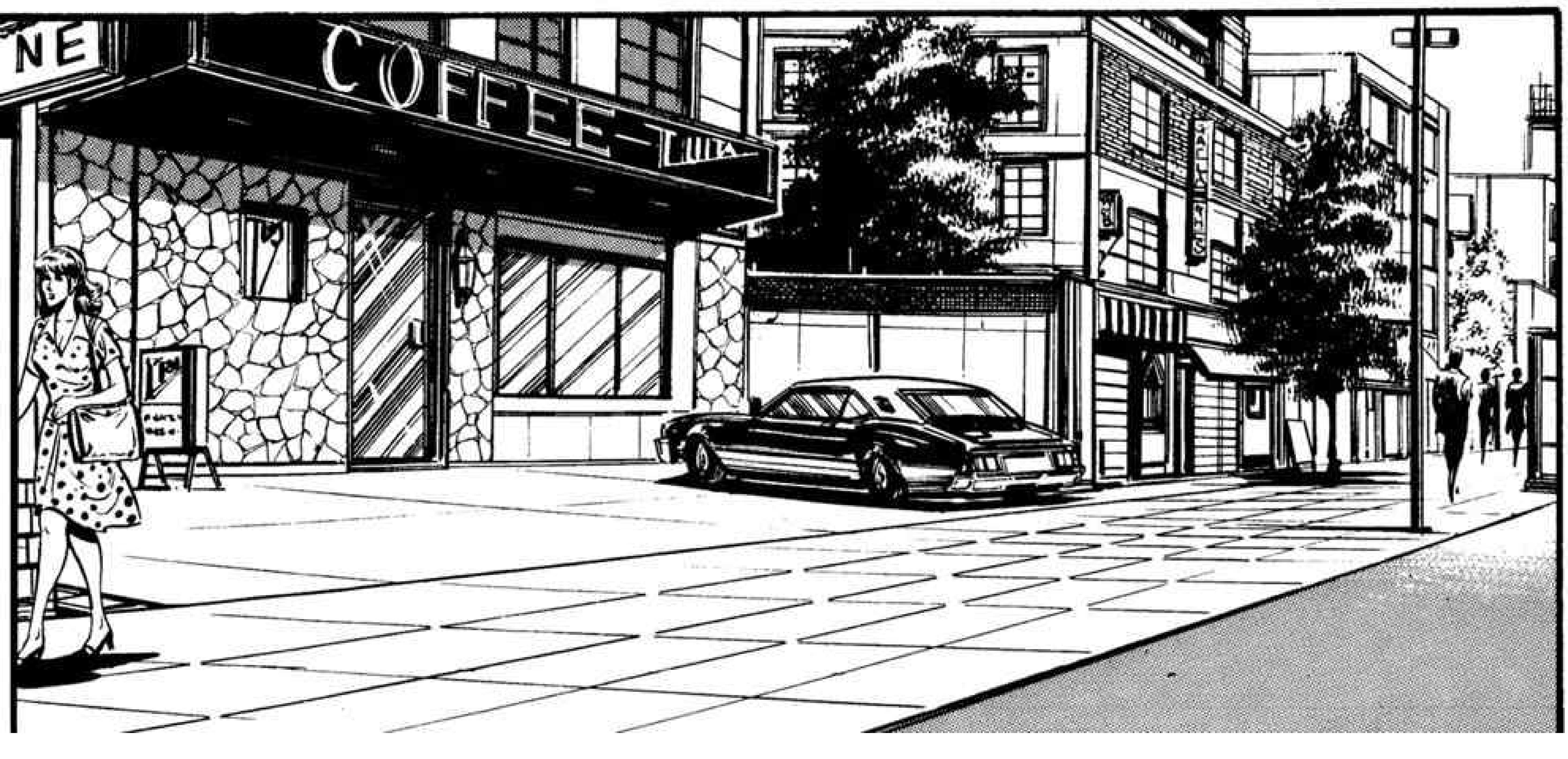

Cape Kennedy - July 12th, 1:00 PM

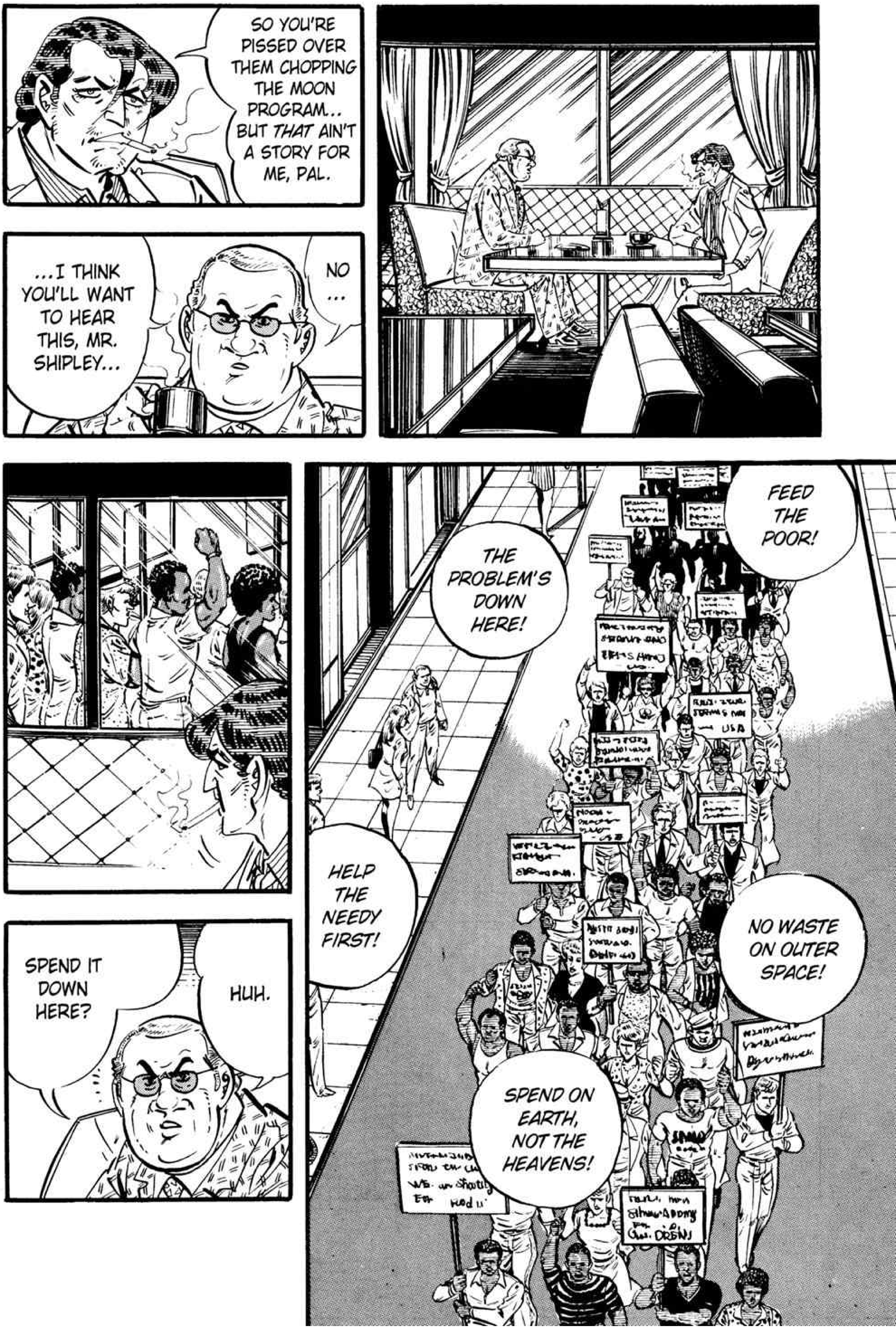
OH, SO *THAT'S* WHERE ALL MY TAXES WENT THIS YEAR...
...FOR FIREWORKS.

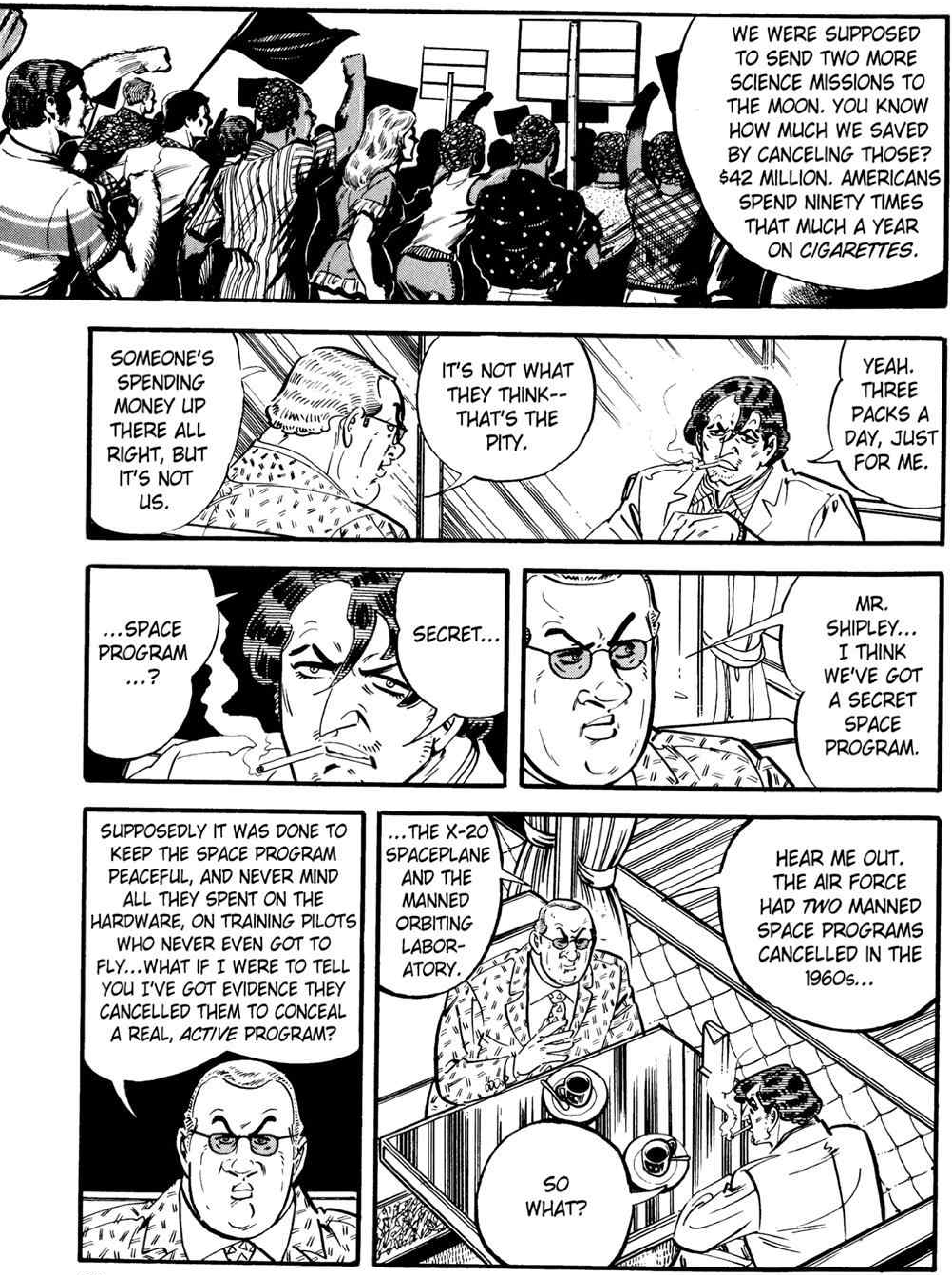

LOOKIN' REAL CLOSE, EH?
SORRY, SIR...
...BUT THERE'S A RADICAL GROUP WHICH MADE THREATS AGAINST THE LAUNCH...
THANKS, PAL.
VVVVRRRMMMMMM
RRRMMM
!!
WHAT THE FUCK--?! THAT'S *MARSH!*

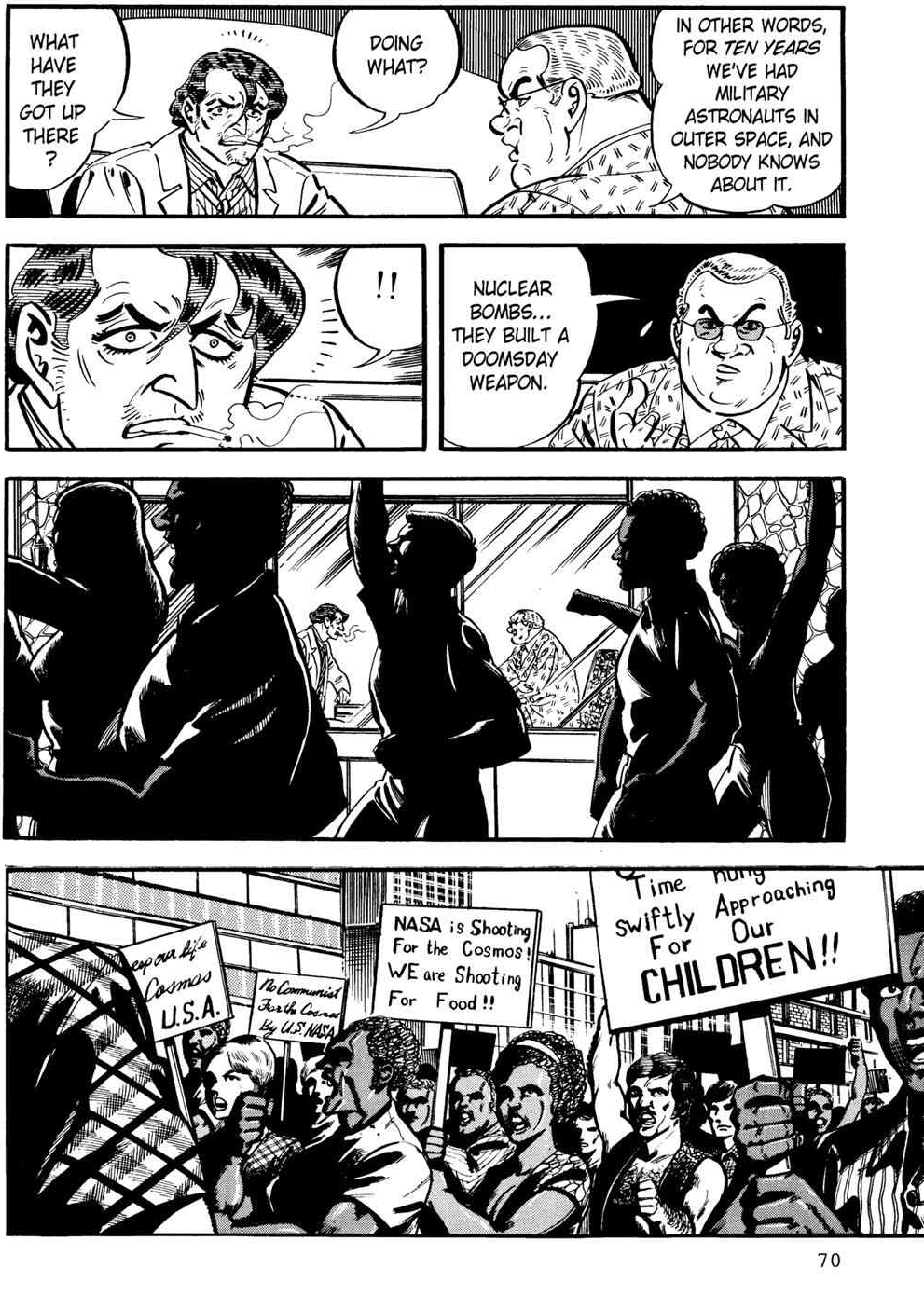

WELL, WELL, WELL ...
...LOOKS LIKE I DIDN'T LOSE MY LEAD AFTER ALL.


Titusville, FL - 15 mi. NW of the Kennedy Space Center

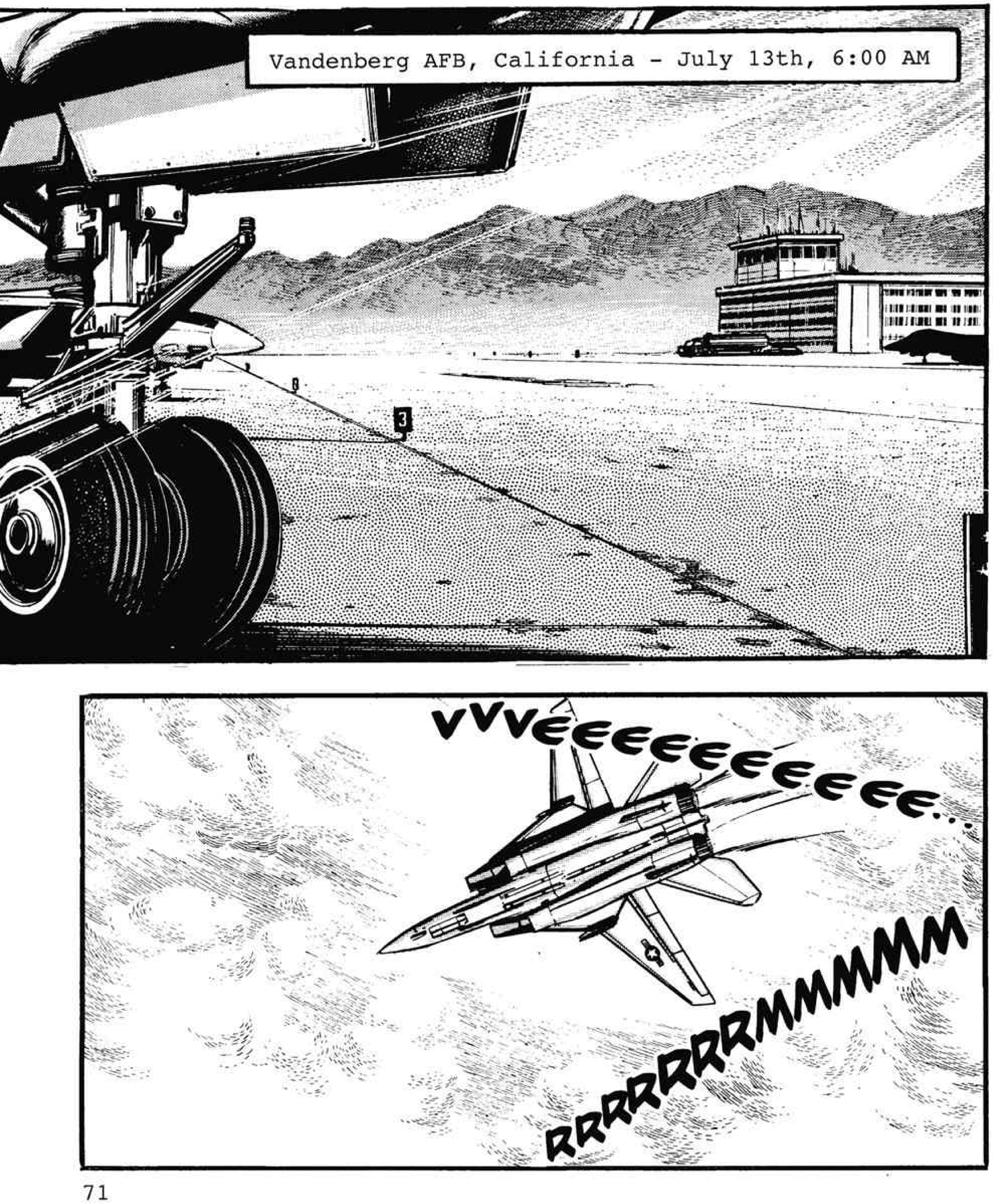

NE
COFFEE

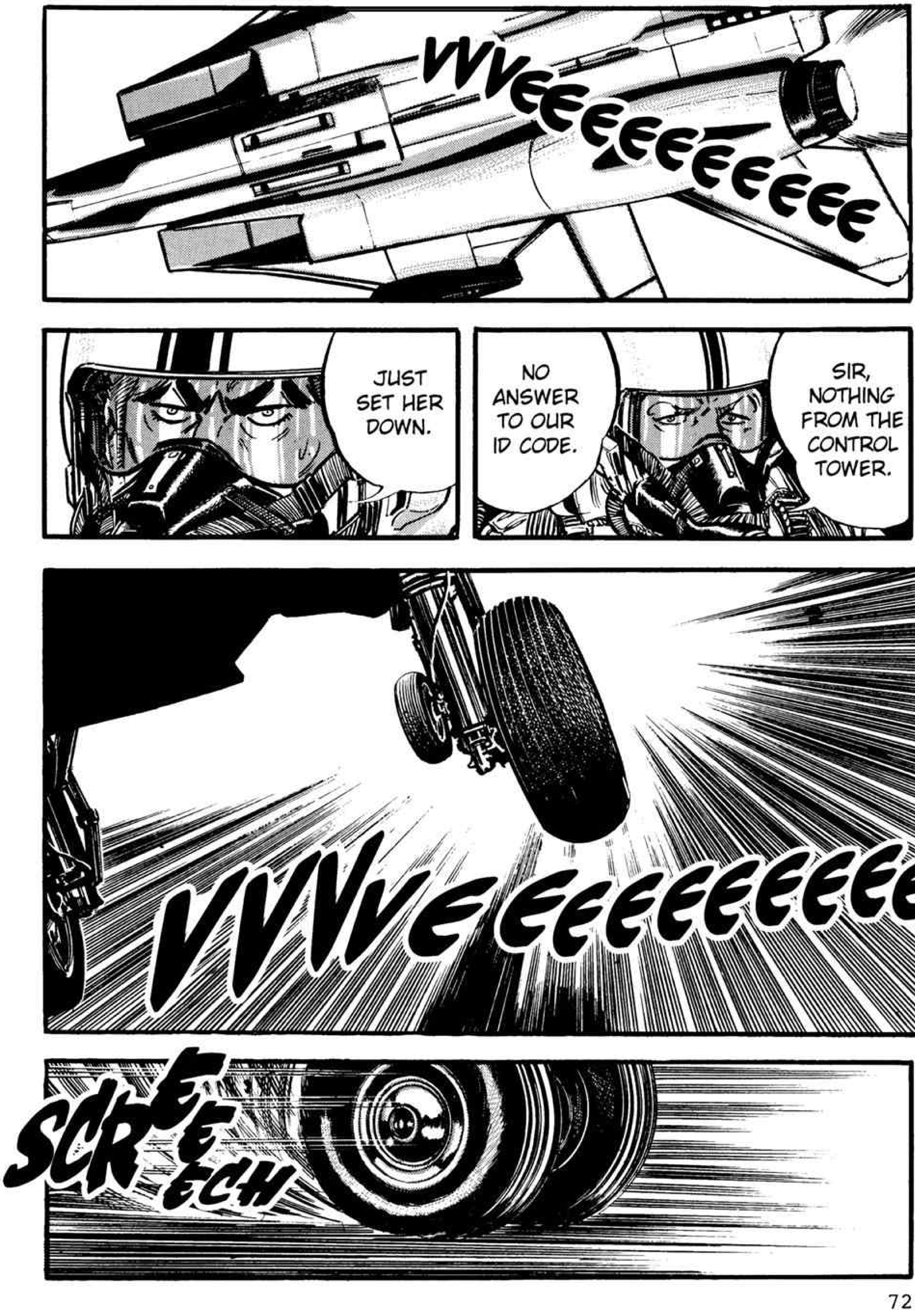

SO YOU'RE PISSED OVER THEM CHOPPING THE MOON PROGRAM.. BUT *THAT* AIN'T A STORY FOR ME, PAL.
NO ...
...I THINK YOU'LL WANT TO HEAR THIS, MR. SHIPLEY...
THE PROBLEM'S DOWN HERE!
FEED THE POOR!
HELP THE NEEDY FIRST!
NO WASTE ON OUTER SPACE!
SPEND ON EARTH, NOT THE HEAVENS!
HUH.
SPEND IT DOWN HERE?

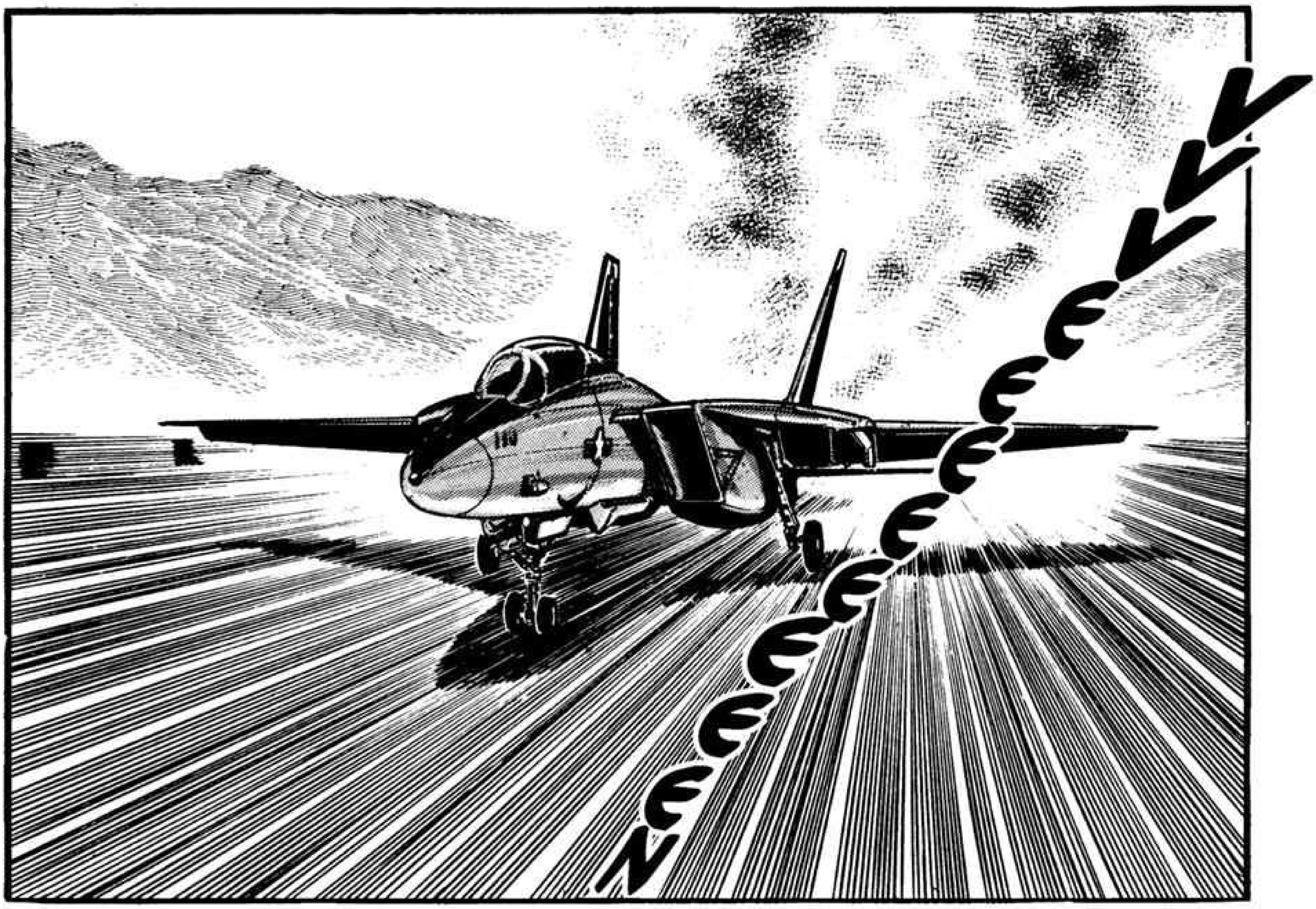

WE WERE SUPPOSED TO SEND TWO MORE SCIENCE MISSIONS TO THE MOON. YOU KNOW HOW MUCH WE SAVED BY CANCELING THOSE? $42 MILLION. AMERICANS SPEND NINETY TIMES THAT MUCH A YEAR ON *CIGARETTES*.
YEAH. THREE PACKS A DAY, JUST FOR ME.
IT'S NOT WHAT THEY THINK--THAT'S THE PITY.
SOMEONE'S SPENDING MONEY UP THERE ALL RIGHT, BUT IT'S NOT US.
MR. SHIPLEY... I THINK WE'VE GOT A SECRET SPACE PROGRAM.
SECRET...
...SPACE PROGRAM...?
HEAR ME OUT. THE AIR FORCE HAD *TWO* MANNED SPACE PROGRAMS CANCELLED IN THE 1960s...
...THE X-20 SPACEPLANE AND THE MANNED ORBITING LABORATORY.
SO WHAT?
SUPPOSEDLY IT WAS DONE TO KEEP THE SPACE PROGRAM PEACEFUL, AND NEVER MIND ALL THEY SPENT ON THE HARDWARE, ON TRAINING PILOTS WHO NEVER EVEN GOT TO FLY...WHAT IF I WERE TO TELL YOU I'VE GOT EVIDENCE THEY CANCELLED THEM TO CONCEAL A REAL, *ACTIVE* PROGRAM?

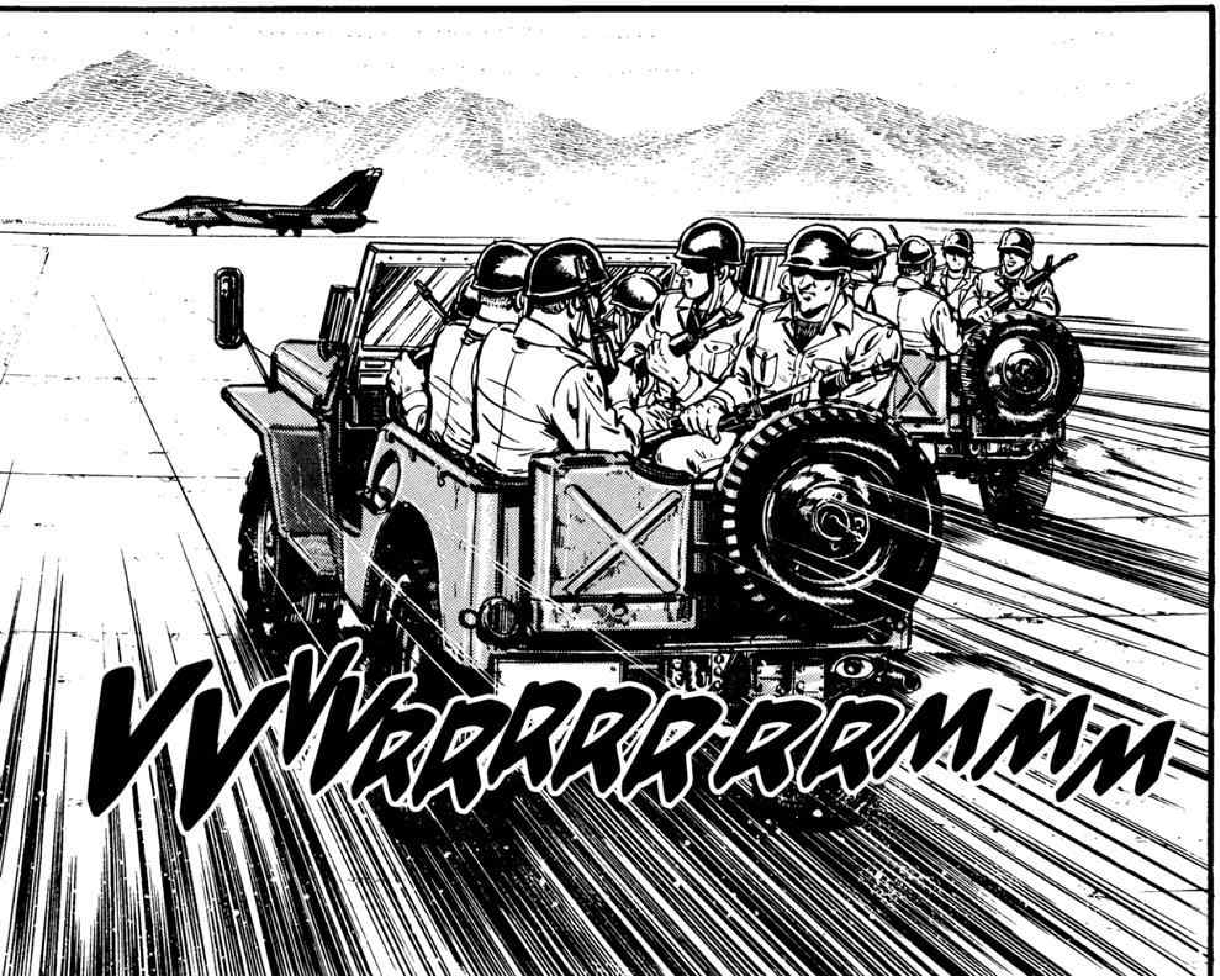

IN OTHER WORDS, FOR *TEN YEARS* WE'VE HAD MILITARY ASTRONAUTS IN OUTER SPACE, AND NOBODY KNOWS ABOUT IT.
DOING WHAT?
WHAT HAVE THEY GOT UP THERE ?
NUCLEAR BOMBS... THEY BUILT A DOOMSDAY WEAPON.
!!
eep our life Cosmos U.S.A.
No Communist For the Cosmos By U.S. NASA
NASA is Shooting For the Cosmos! WE are Shooting For Food!!
Time hung swiftly Approaching For Our CHILDREN!!

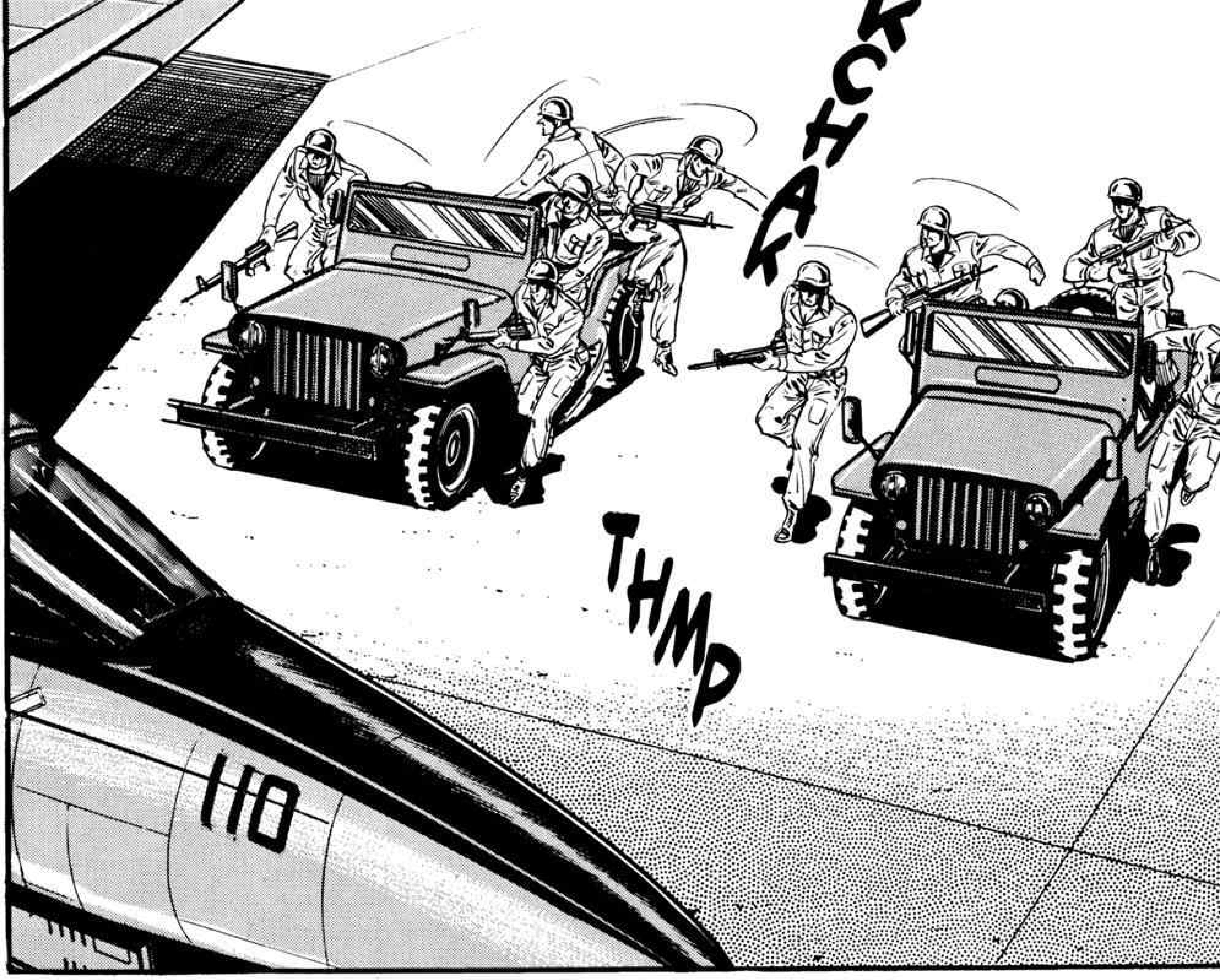
PART 10 EMERGENCY LANDING

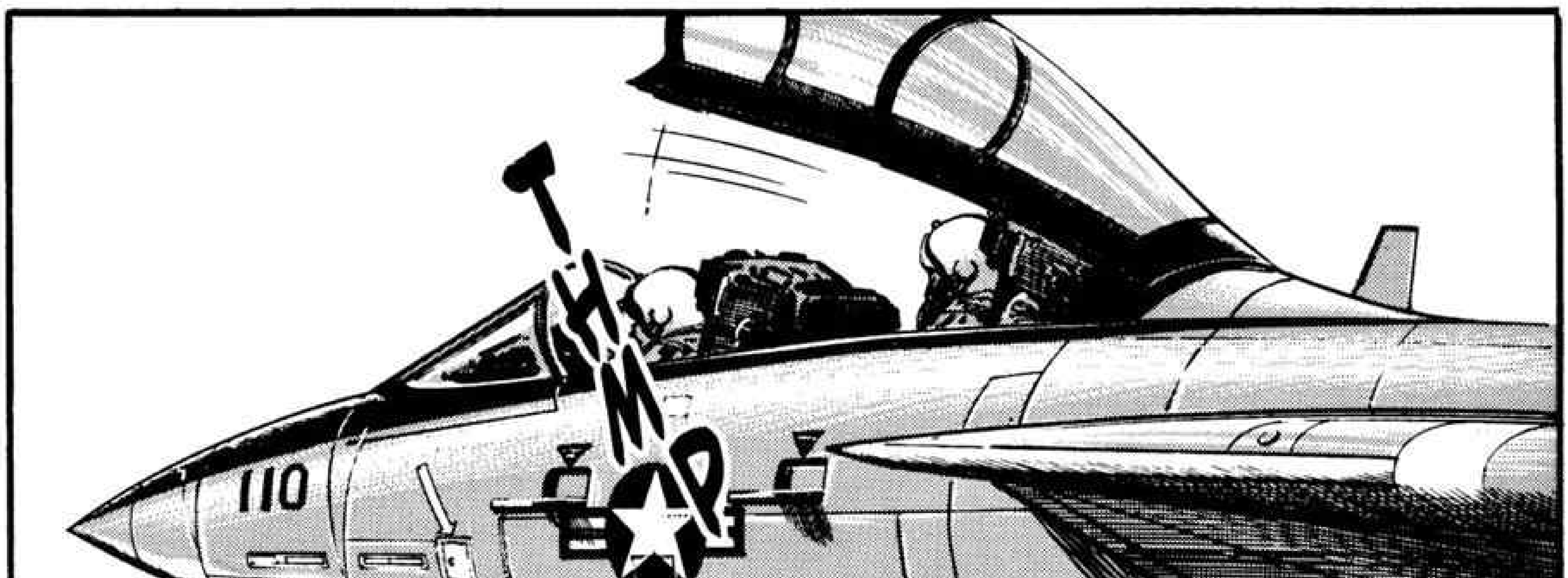

Vandenberg AFB, California - July 13th, 6:00 AM
VVVEEEEEEEEEEEE...
RRRRRRRMMMMMM

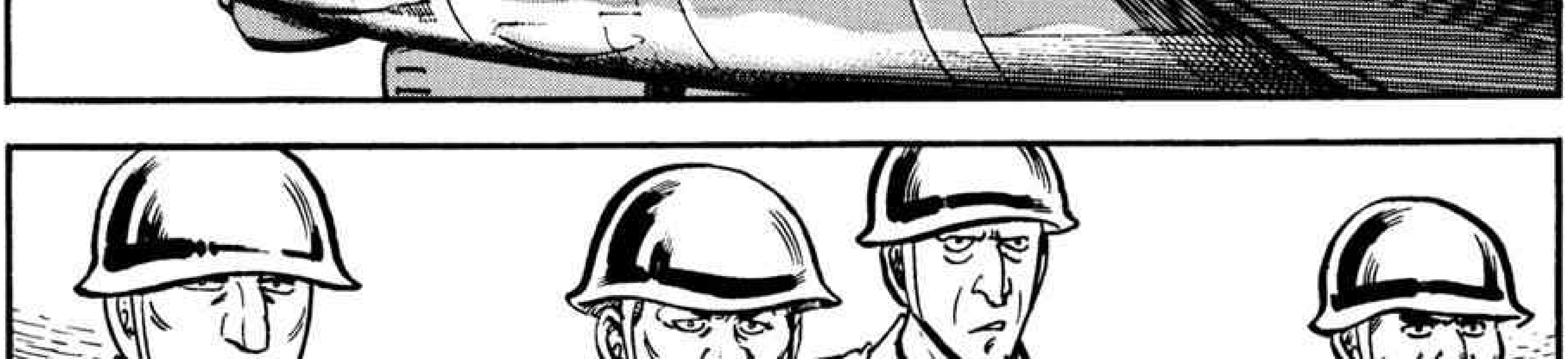

VVVEEEEEEEEEEEE
SIR, NOTHING FROM THE CONTROL TOWER.
NO ANSWER TO OUR ID CODE.
JUST SET HER DOWN.
VVVVEEEEEEEEEEEE
SCREEECH

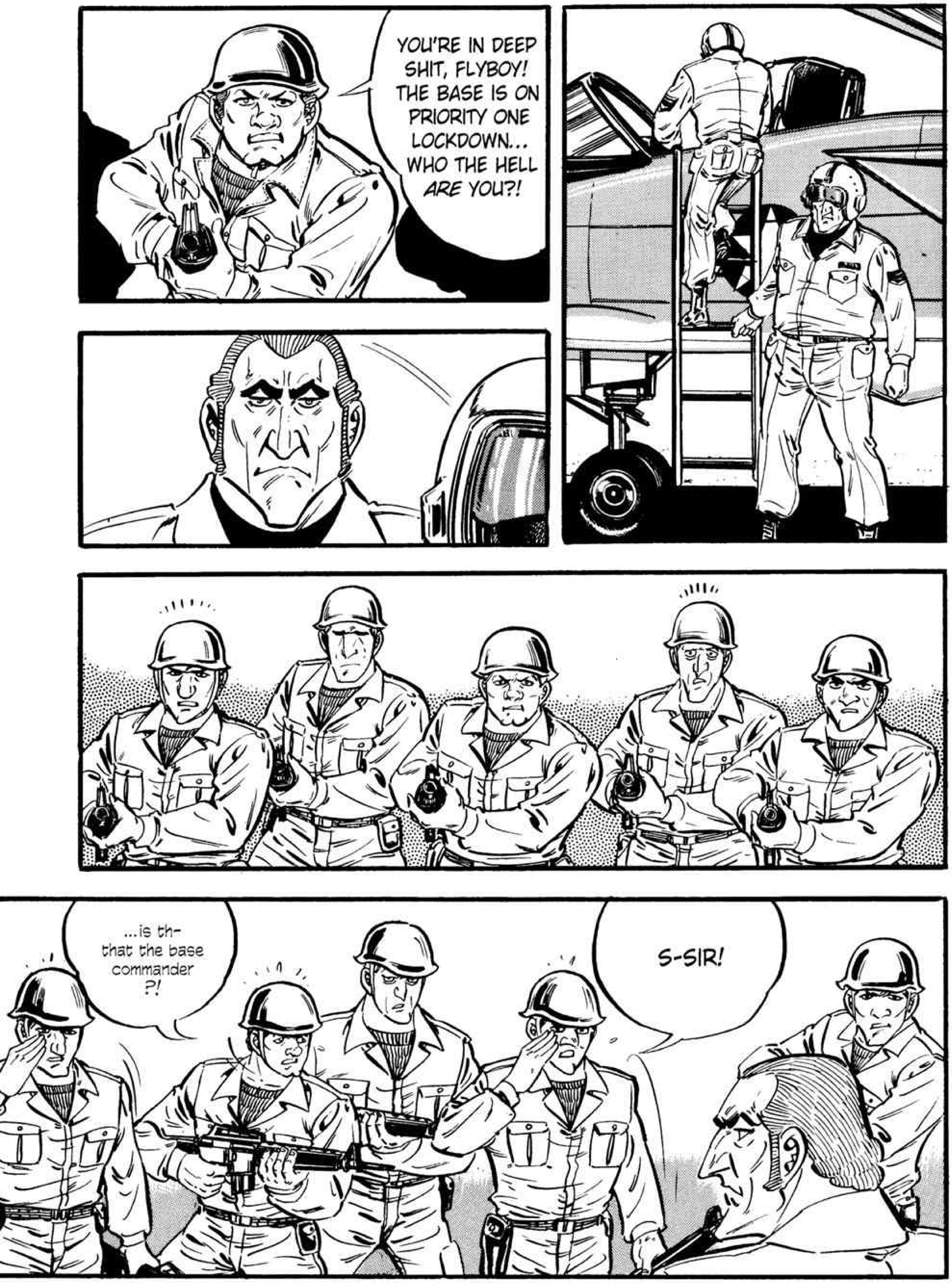

VVVVEEEEEEEEEEEN

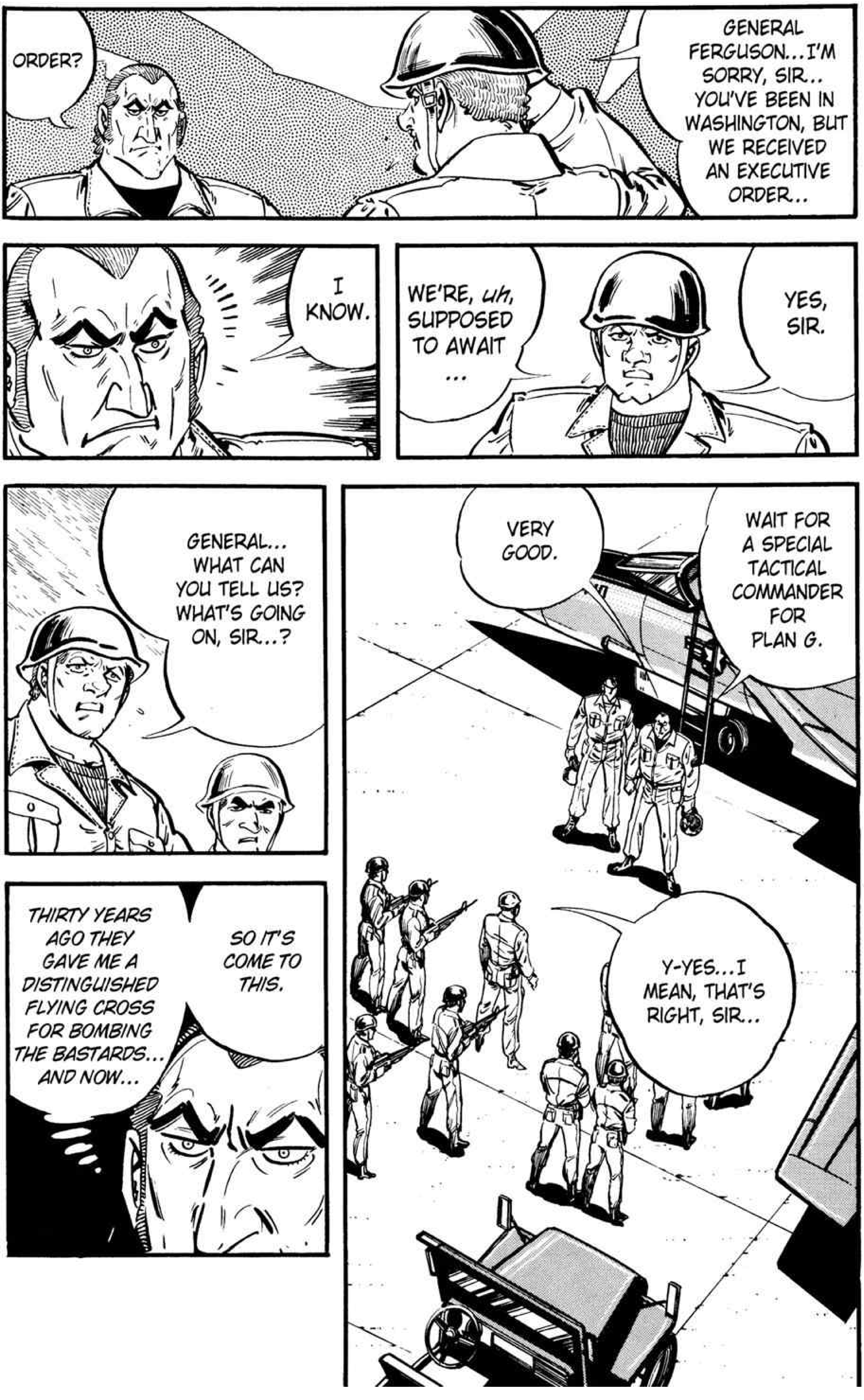

VVVRRRRRRRRMMMM

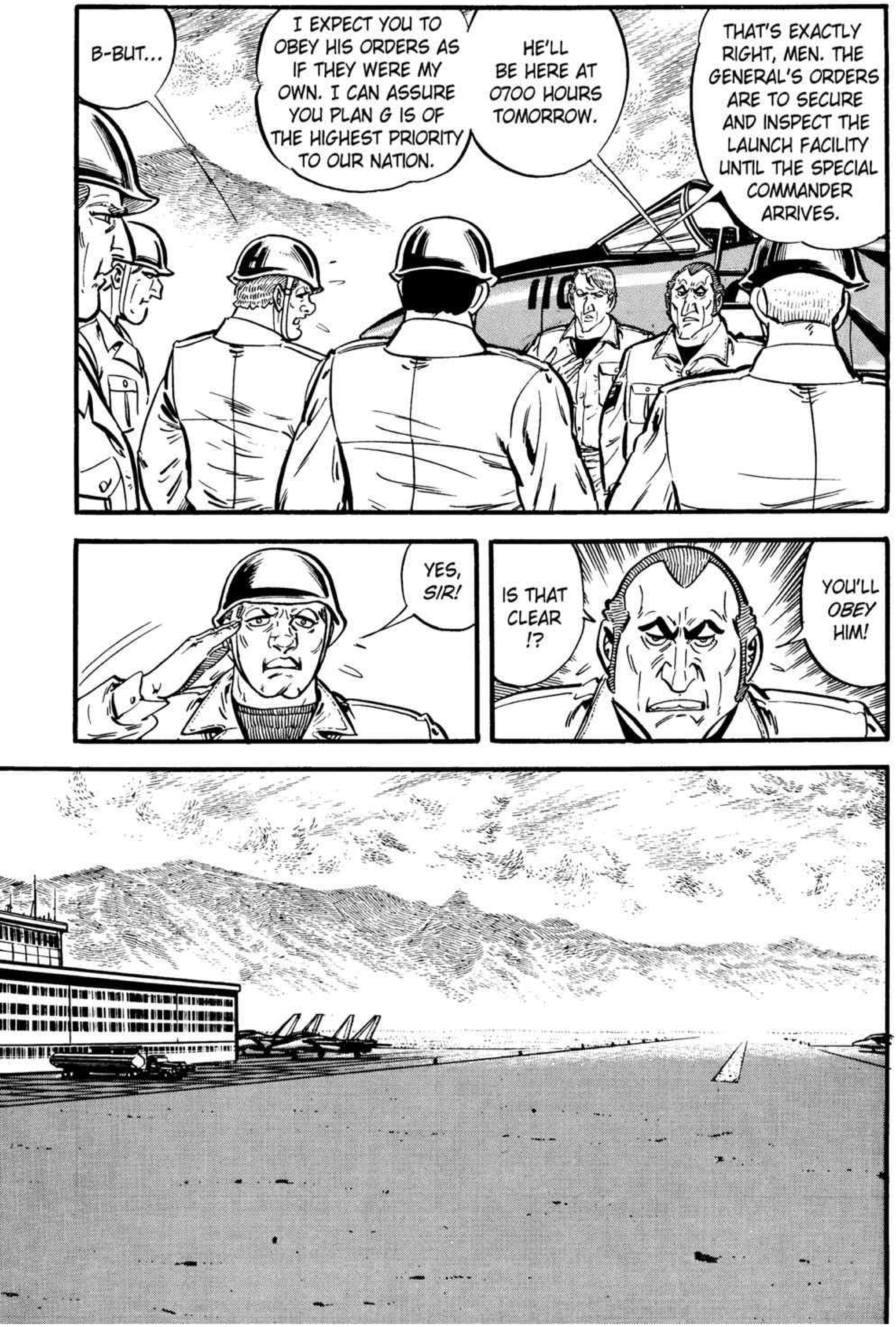

KRCHAK
THMP
110


THMP
110

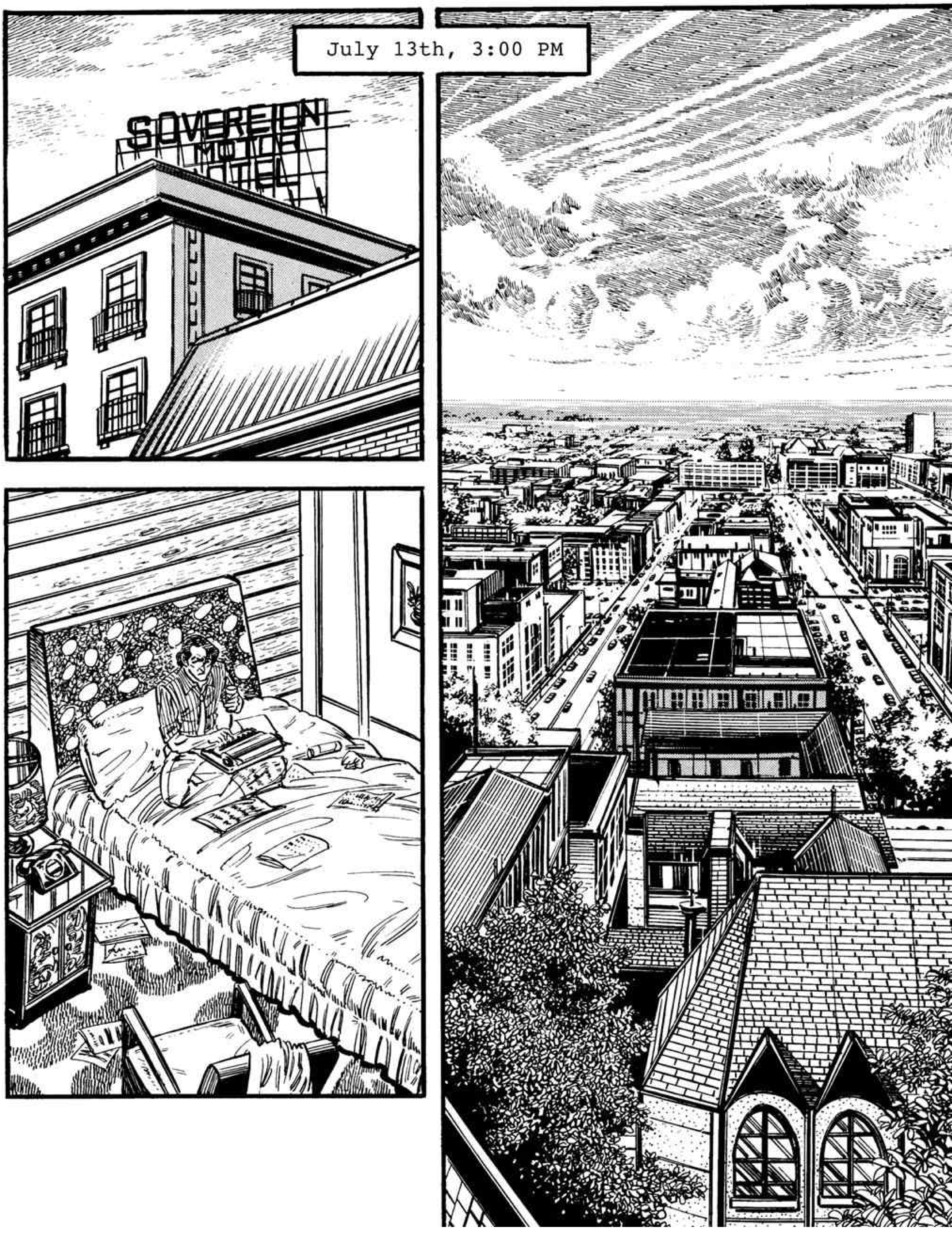


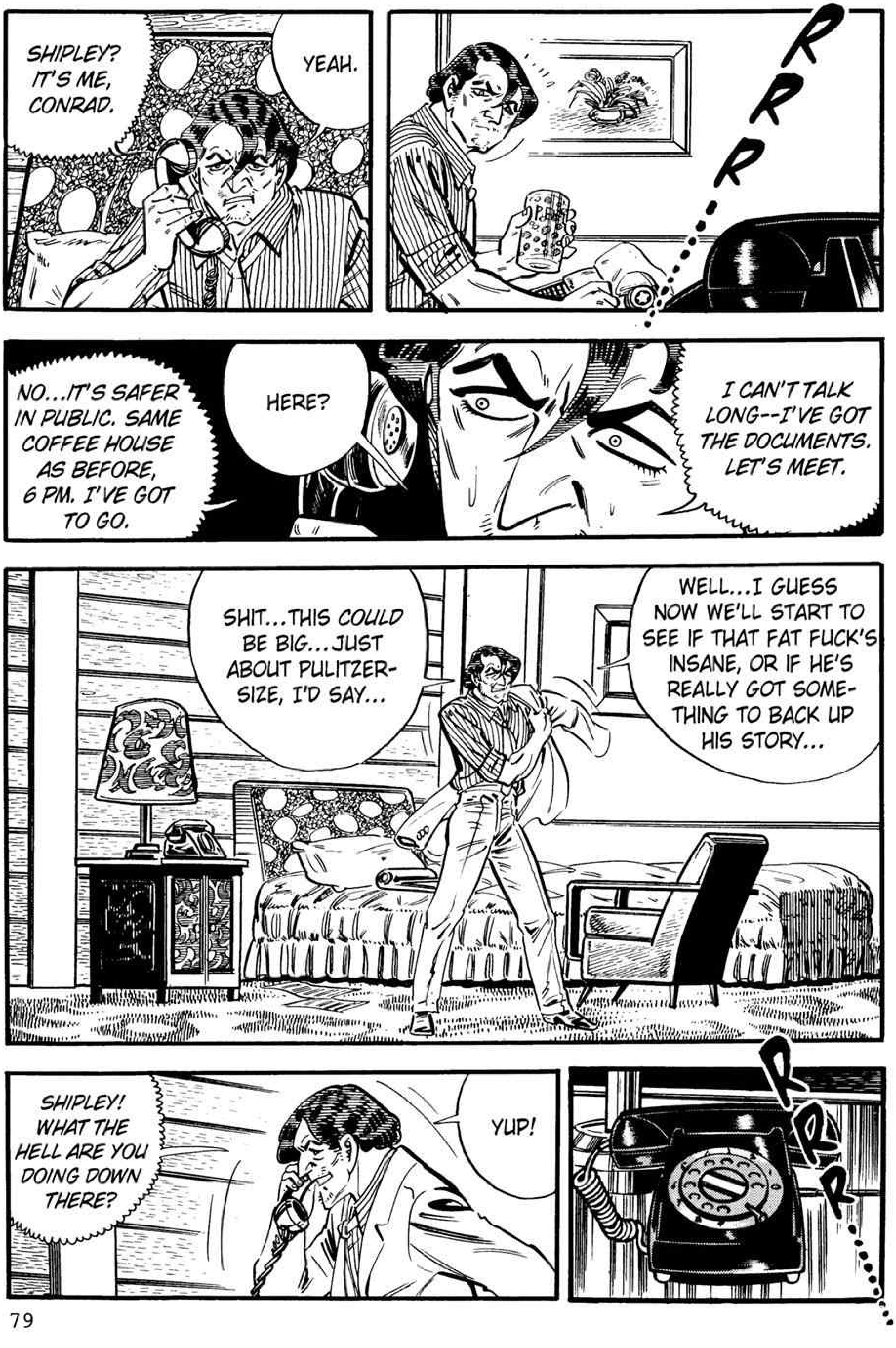

YOU'RE IN DEEP SHIT, FLYBOY! THE BASE IS ON PRIORITY ONE LOCKDOWN... WHO THE HELL *ARE YOU*?!
...is th-that the base commander ?!
S-SIR!

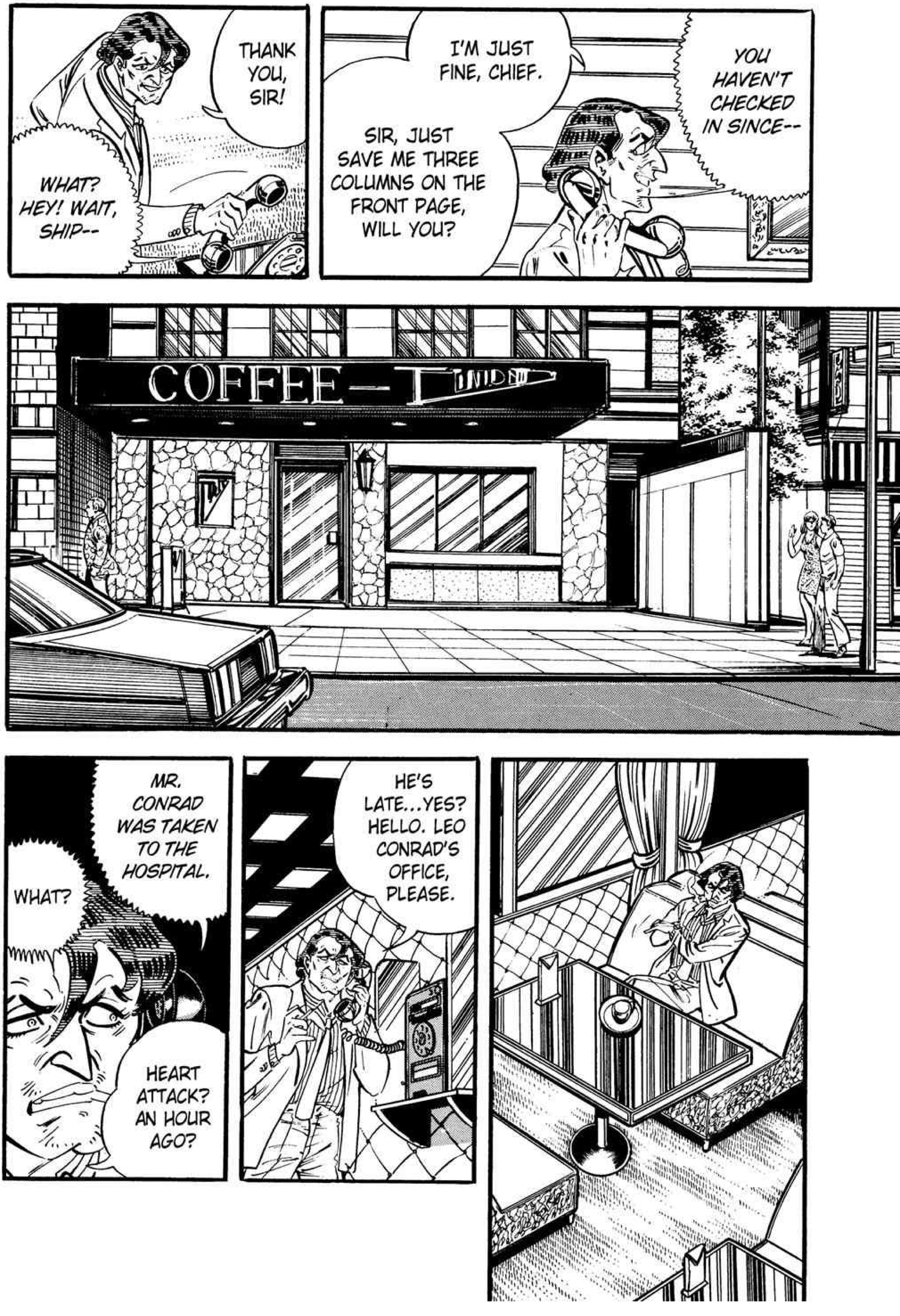

GENERAL FERGUSON...I'M SORRY, SIR.. YOU'VE BEEN IN WASHINGTON, BUT WE RECEIVED AN EXECUTIVE ORDER..
ORDER?
YES, SIR.
WE'RE, *uh*, SUPPOSED TO AWAIT ...
I KNOW.
WAIT FOR A SPECIAL TACTICAL COMMANDER FOR PLAN G.
VERY GOOD.
Y-YES...I MEAN, THAT'S RIGHT, SIR...
GENERAL... WHAT CAN YOU TELL US? WHAT'S GOING ON, SIR...?
SO IT'S COME TO THIS.
THIRTY YEARS AGO THEY GAVE ME A DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS FOR BOMBING THE BASTARDS... AND NOW...

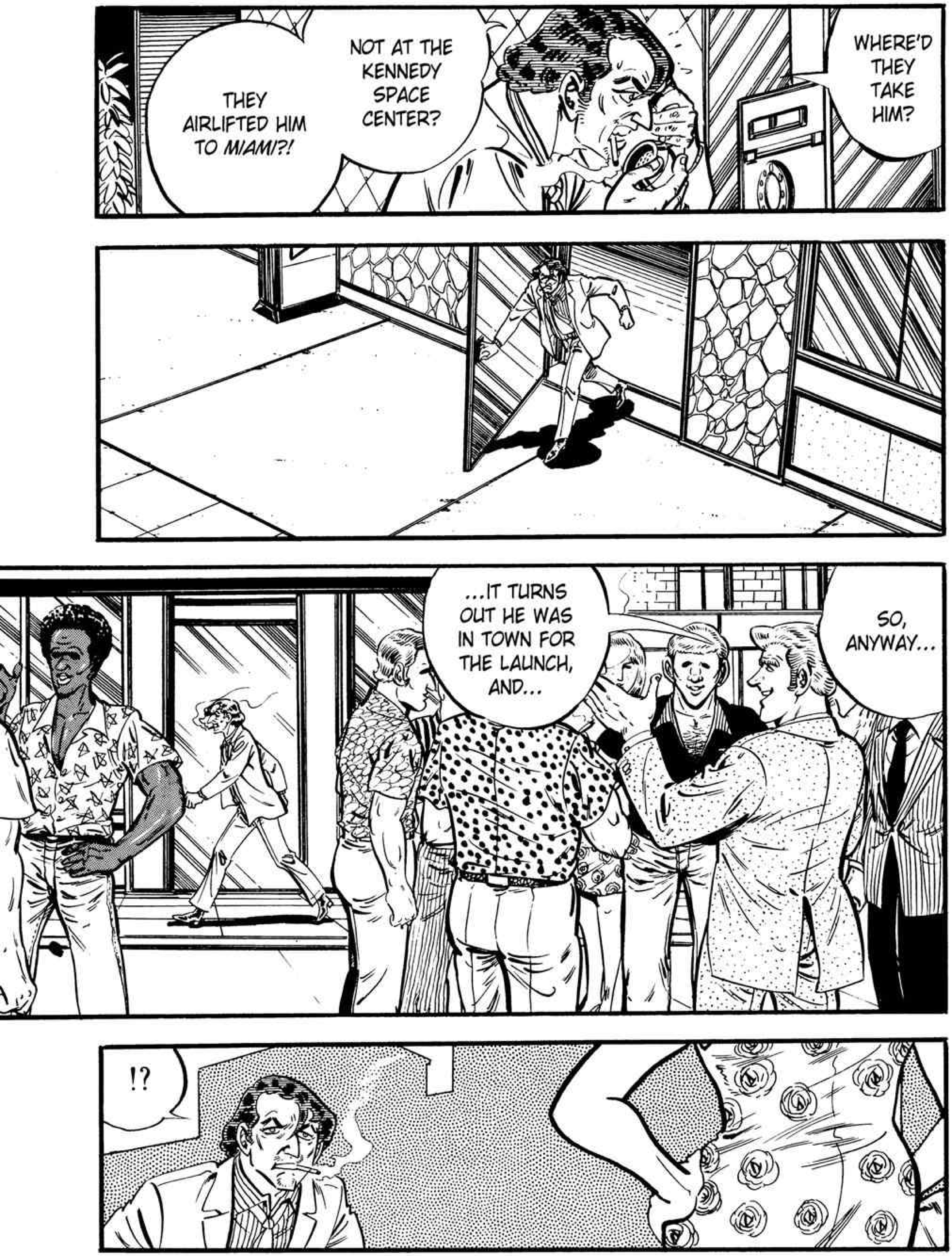

THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT, MEN. THE GENERAL'S ORDERS ARE TO SECURE AND INSPECT THE LAUNCH FACILITY UNTIL THE SPECIAL COMMANDER ARRIVES.
HE'LL BE HERE AT 0700 HOURS TOMORROW.
I EXPECT YOU TO OBEY HIS ORDERS AS IF THEY WERE MY OWN. I CAN ASSURE YOU PLAN G IS OF THE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO OUR NATION.
B-BUT...
110
YOU'LL *OBEY* HIM!
IS THAT CLEAR !?
YES, *SIR!*

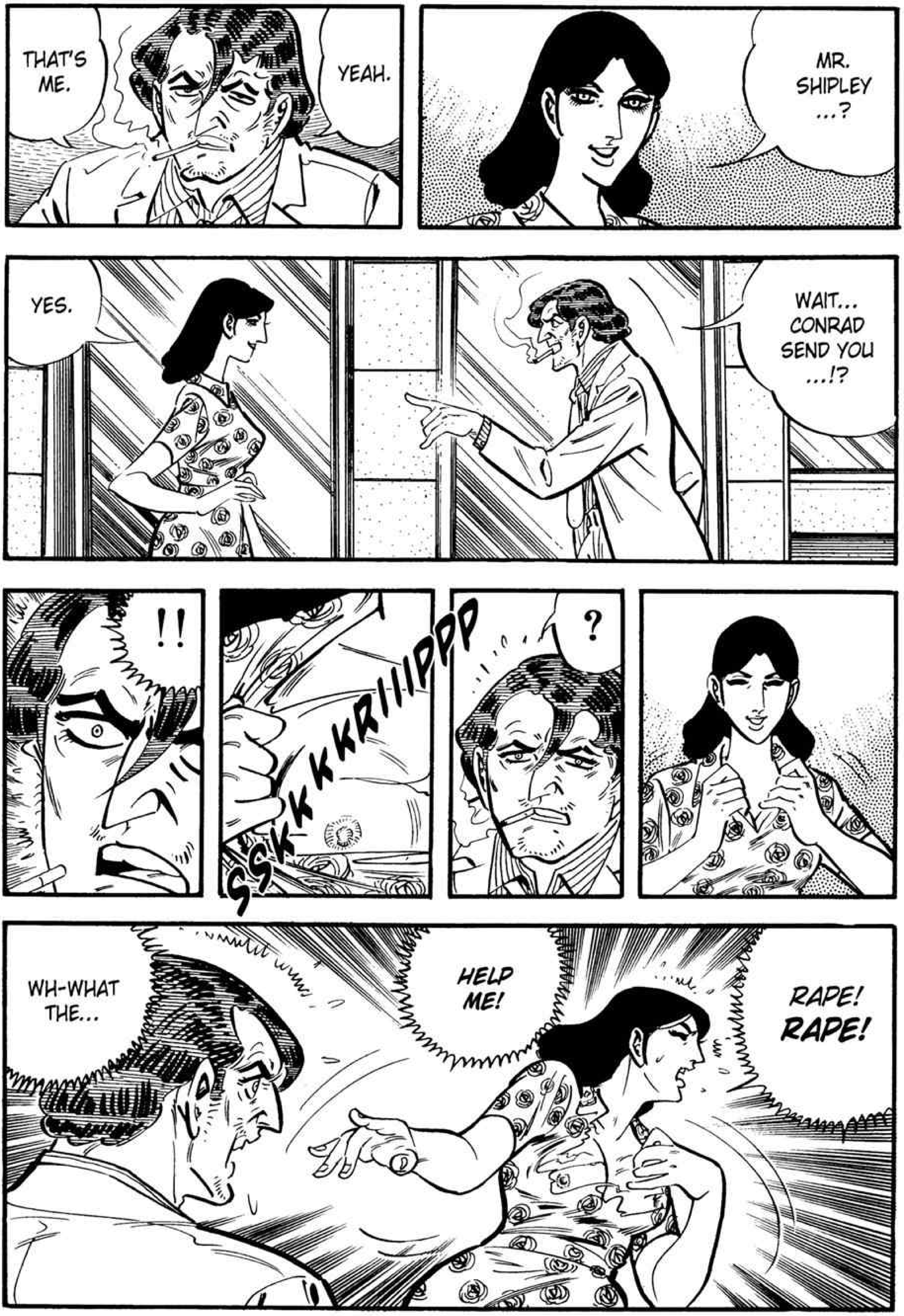
PART 11 THE ARREST OF APPLESAUCE


July 13th, 3:00 PM
SOVEREIGN MOTOR HOTEL

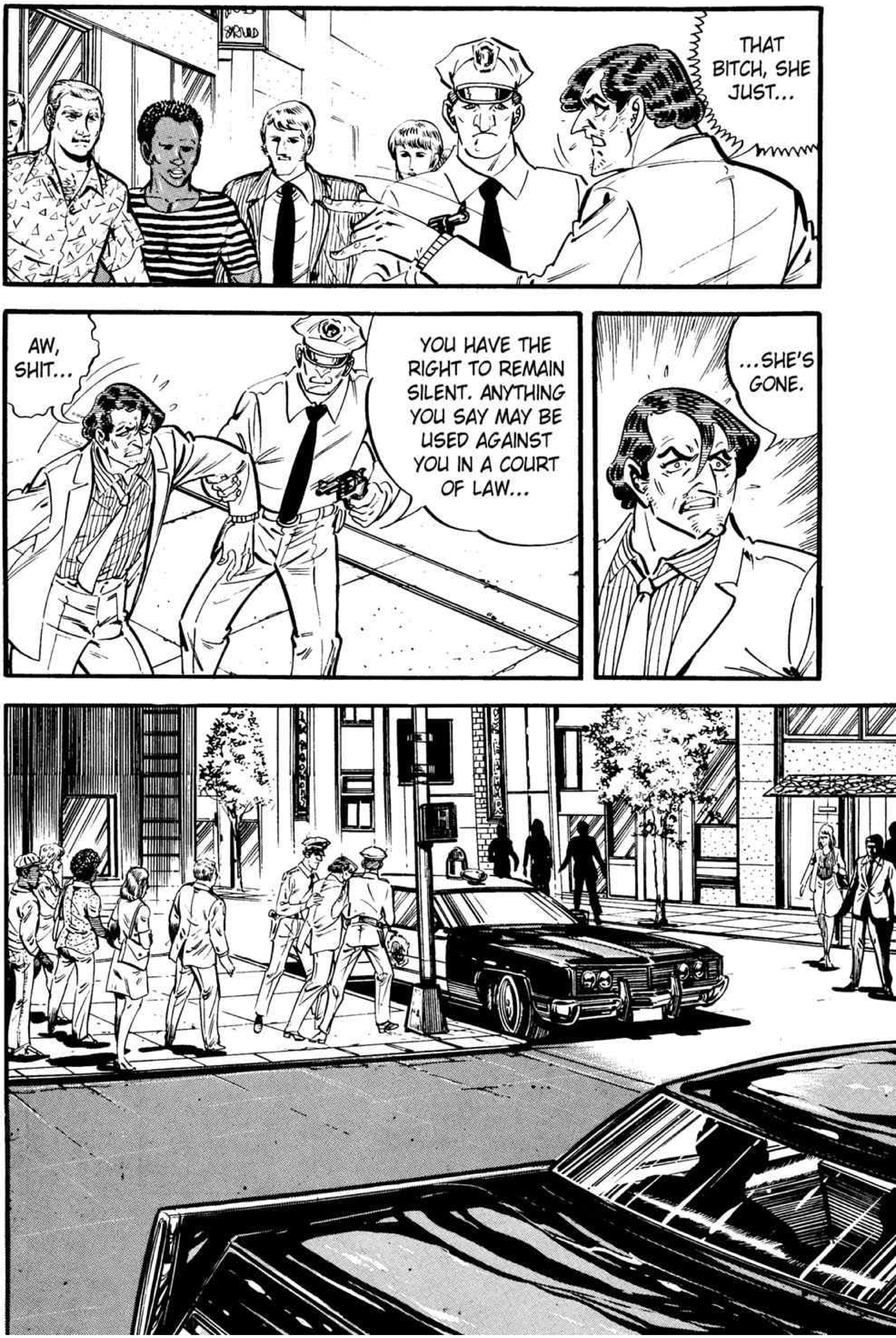

RRRR...
YEAH.
SHIPLEY? IT'S ME, CONRAD.
I CAN'T TALK LONG--I'VE GOT THE DOCUMENTS. LET'S MEET.
HERE?
NO...IT'S SAFER IN PUBLIC. SAME COFFEE HOUSE AS BEFORE, 6 PM. I'VE GOT TO GO.
WELL...I GUESS NOW WE'LL START TO SEE IF THAT FAT FUCK'S INSANE, OR IF HE'S REALLY GOT SOMETHING TO BACK UP HIS STORY...
SHIT...THIS *COULD* BE BIG...JUST ABOUT PULITZER-SIZE, I'D SAY...
RRRR...
YUP!
SHIPLEY! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?

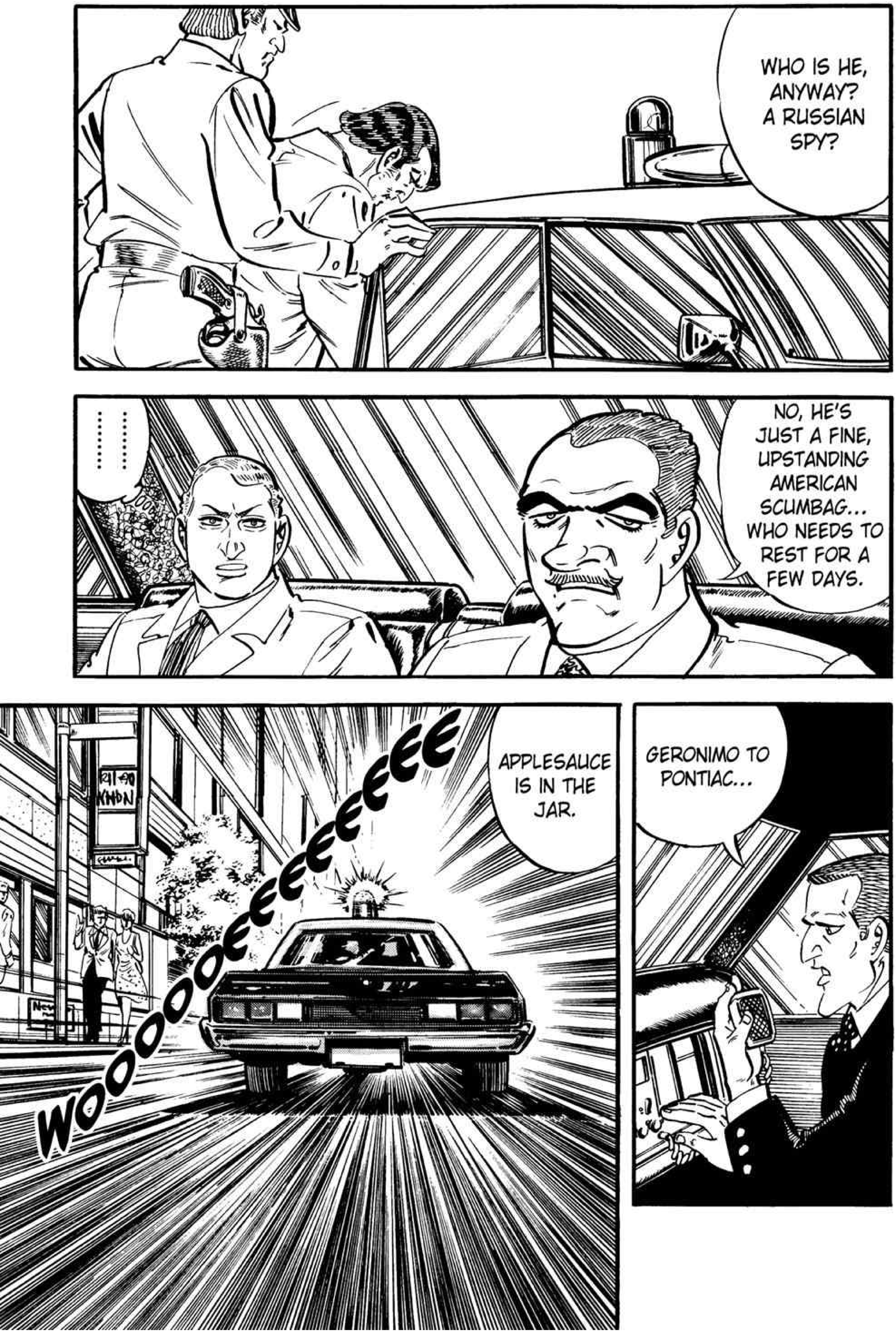

YOU HAVEN'T CHECKED IN SINCE--
I'M JUST FINE, CHIEF.
SIR, JUST SAVE ME THREE COLUMNS ON THE FRONT PAGE, WILL YOU?
THANK YOU, SIR!
WHAT? HEY! WAIT, SHIP--
COFFEE—T
HE'S LATE...YES? HELLO. LEO CONRAD'S OFFICE, PLEASE.
MR. CONRAD WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL.
WHAT?
HEART ATTACK? AN HOUR AGO?


WHERE'D THEY TAKE HIM?
NOT AT THE KENNEDY SPACE CENTER?
THEY AIRLIFTED HIM TO *MIAMI*?!
SO, ANYWAY...
...IT TURNS OUT HE WAS IN TOWN FOR THE LAUNCH, AND...
!?


MR. SHIPLEY ...?
YEAH.
THAT'S ME.
WAIT... CONRAD SEND YOU ...!?
YES.
?
SSKKKKRIIIPPP
!!
RAPE! RAPE!
HELP ME!
WH-WHAT THE...

HEY! I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING!
N
YOU'RE UNDER ARREST. RAISE YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR.
WAIT! THIS IS A *SETUP!!*

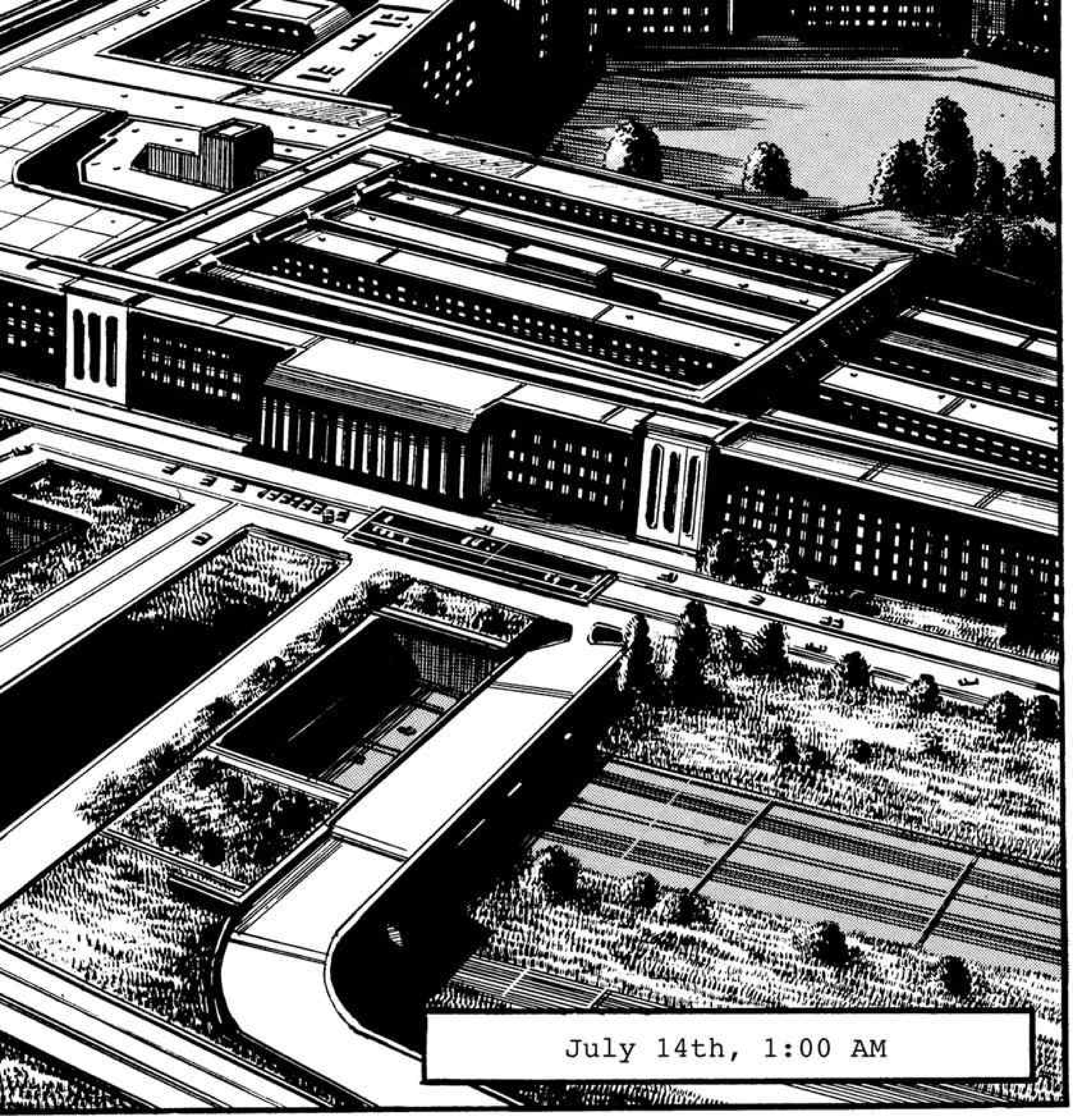

THAT BITCH, SHE JUST...
AW, SHIT...
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT. ANYTHING YOU SAY MAY BE USED AGAINST YOU IN A COURT OF LAW...
...SHE'S GONE.

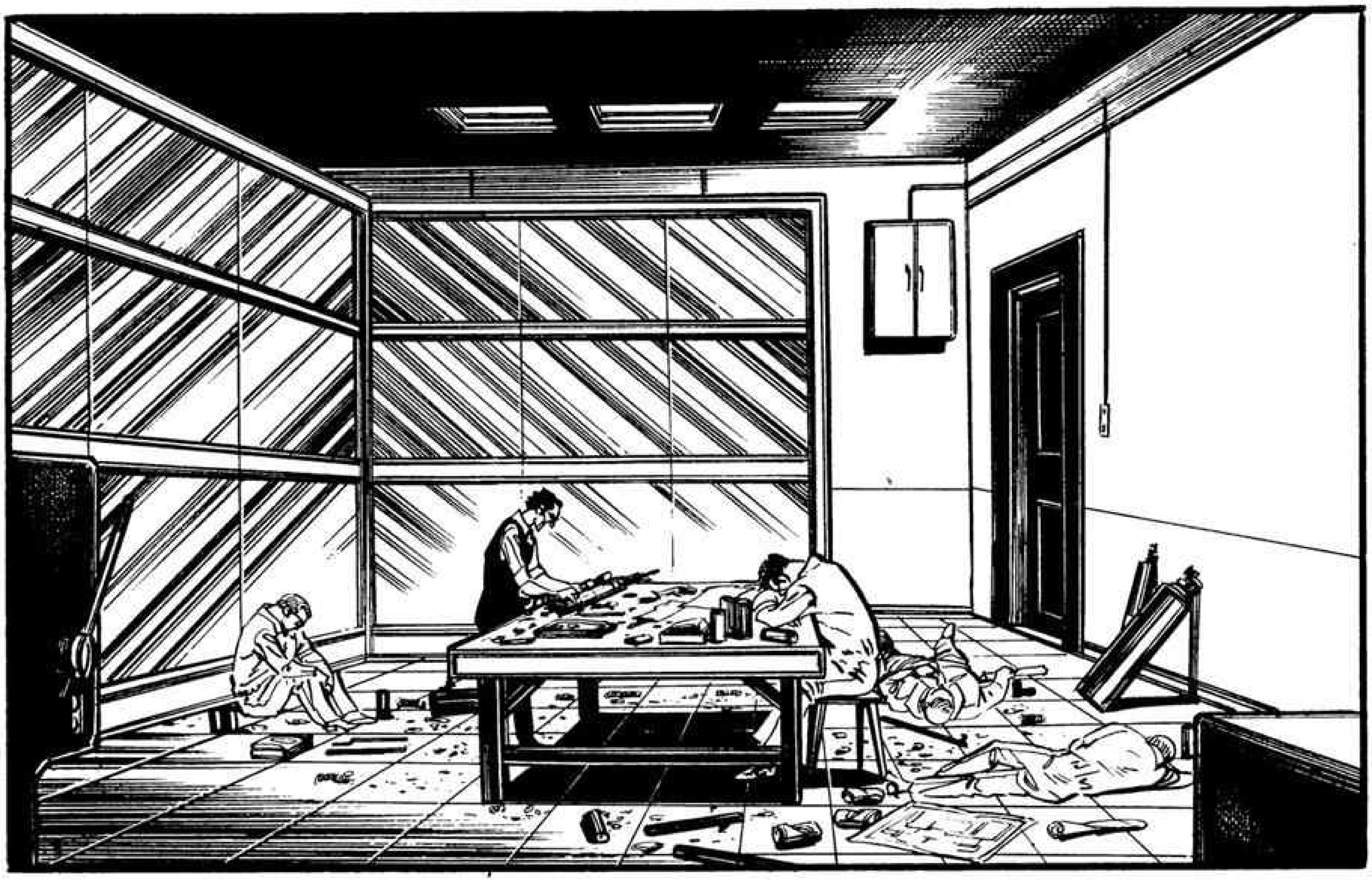

WHO IS HE, ANYWAY? A RUSSIAN SPY?
NO, HE'S JUST A FINE, UPSTANDING AMERICAN SCUMBAG… WHO NEEDS TO REST FOR A FEW DAYS.
……
GERONIMO TO PONTIAC…
APPLESAUCE IS IN THE JAR.
WOOOOOEEEEEEEEEEEEE

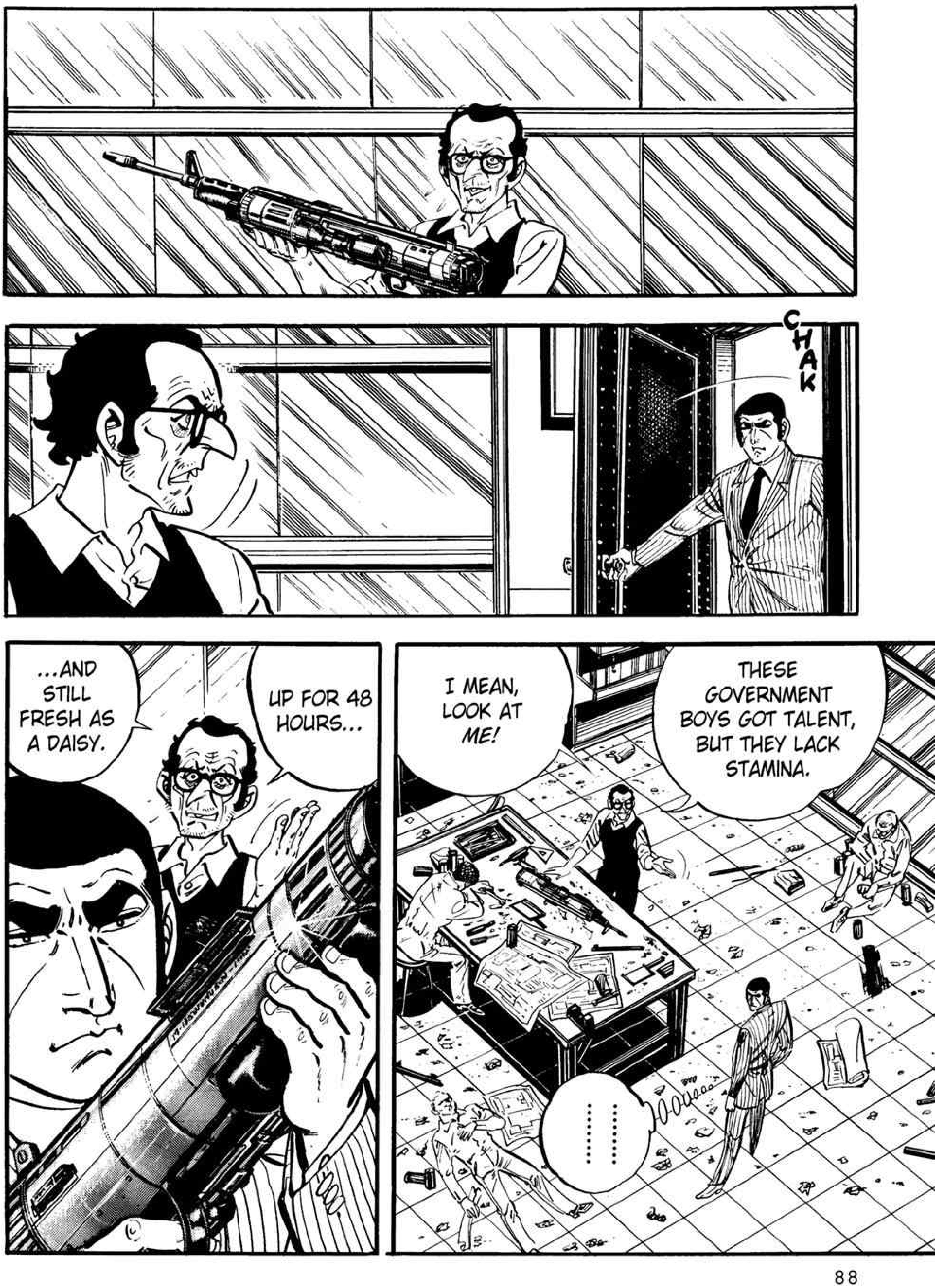
MY WORK IS DONE HERE.
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

PART 12

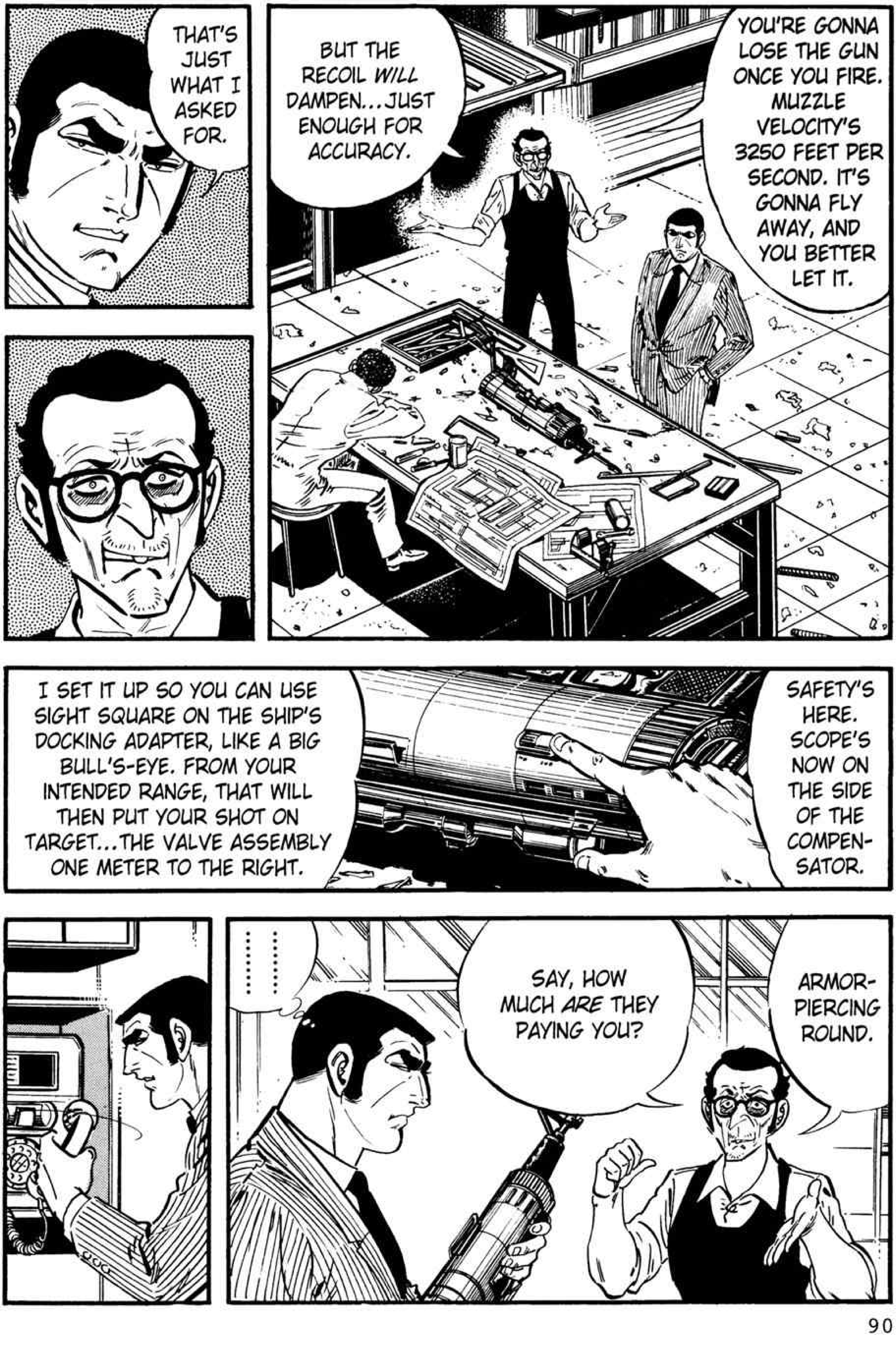
WITHOUT SLEEP OR REST

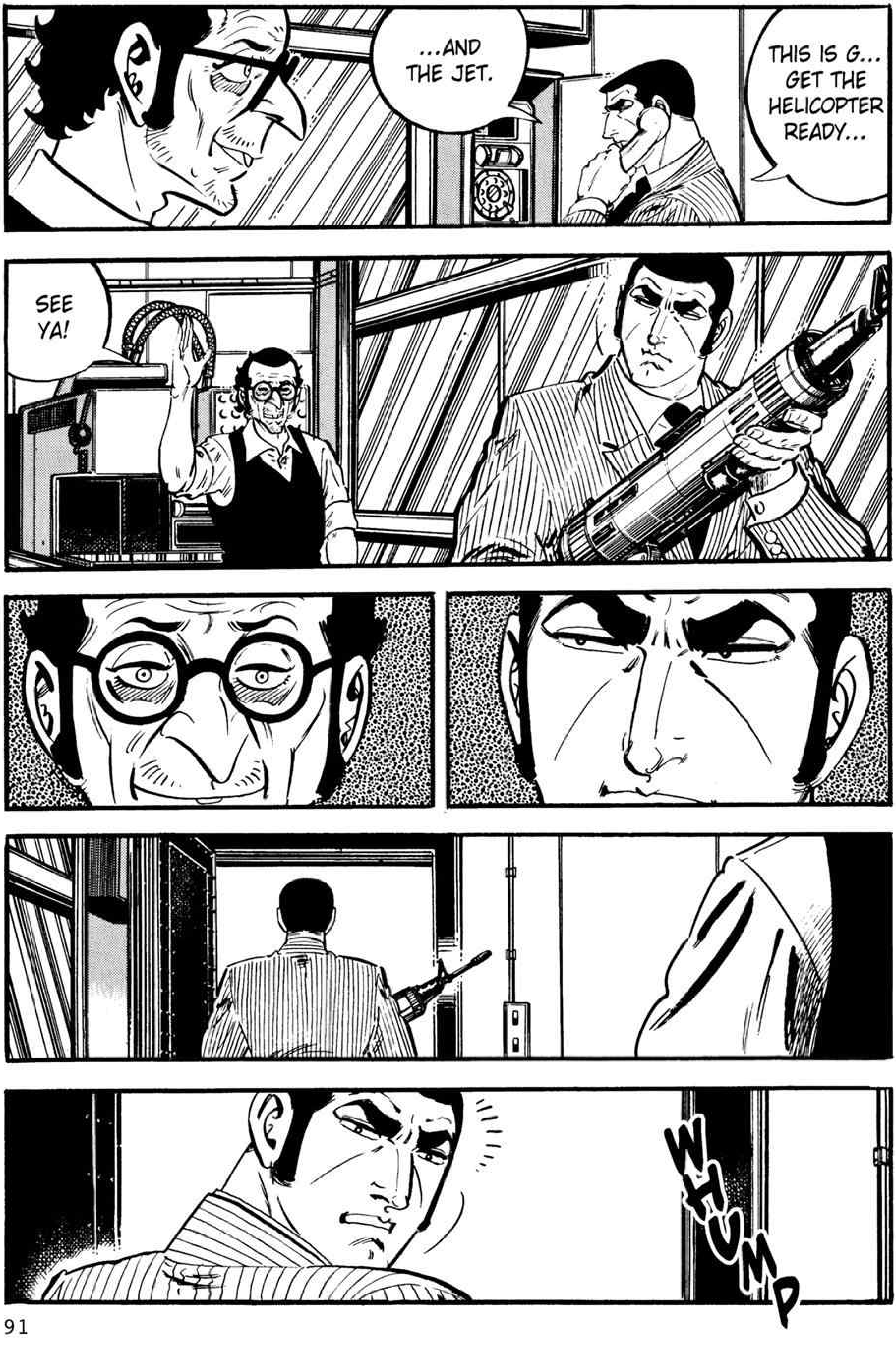

July 14th, 1:00 AM

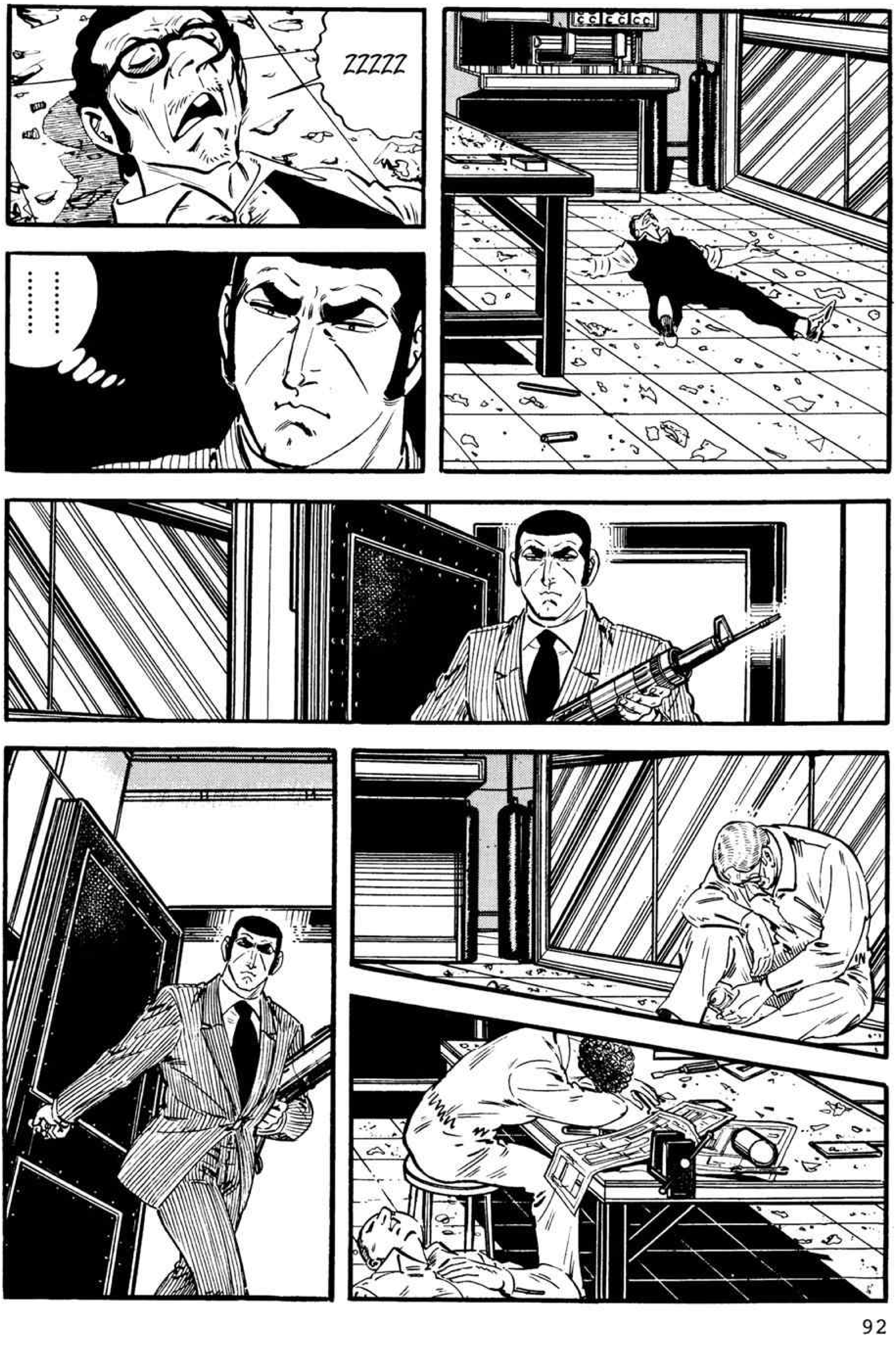



CHAK
THESE GOVERNMENT BOYS GOT TALENT, BUT THEY LACK STAMINA.
I MEAN, LOOK AT *ME!*
......
UP FOR 48 HOURS...
...AND STILL FRESH AS A DAISY.

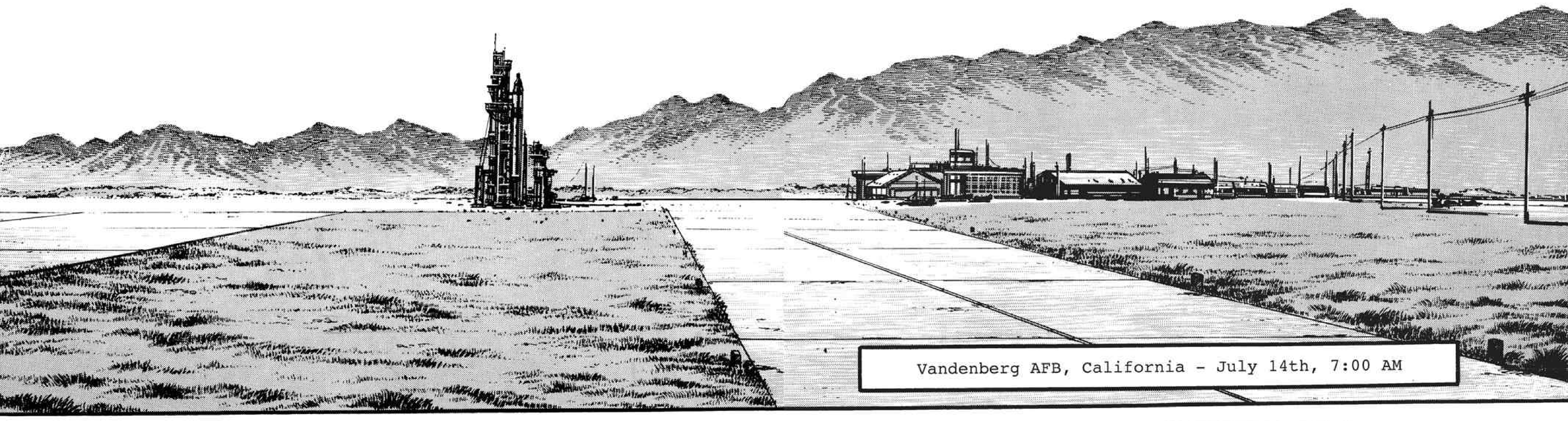
OKAY...TOOK OFF THE BUTT, REPLACED IT WITH A FOLDING FRAME STOCK.
TRIGGER GUARD'S WIDENED SO YOU CAN USE IT WITH THE SUIT GLOVES.
AIR RESISTANCE AIN'T GONNA BE A PROBLEM, NATCH...
...THE WHOLE ISSUE'S IN CONTROLLING THE RECOIL. SO I GOT THIS NIFTY COMPENSATOR ON IT LIKE A PIG IN A BLANKET.

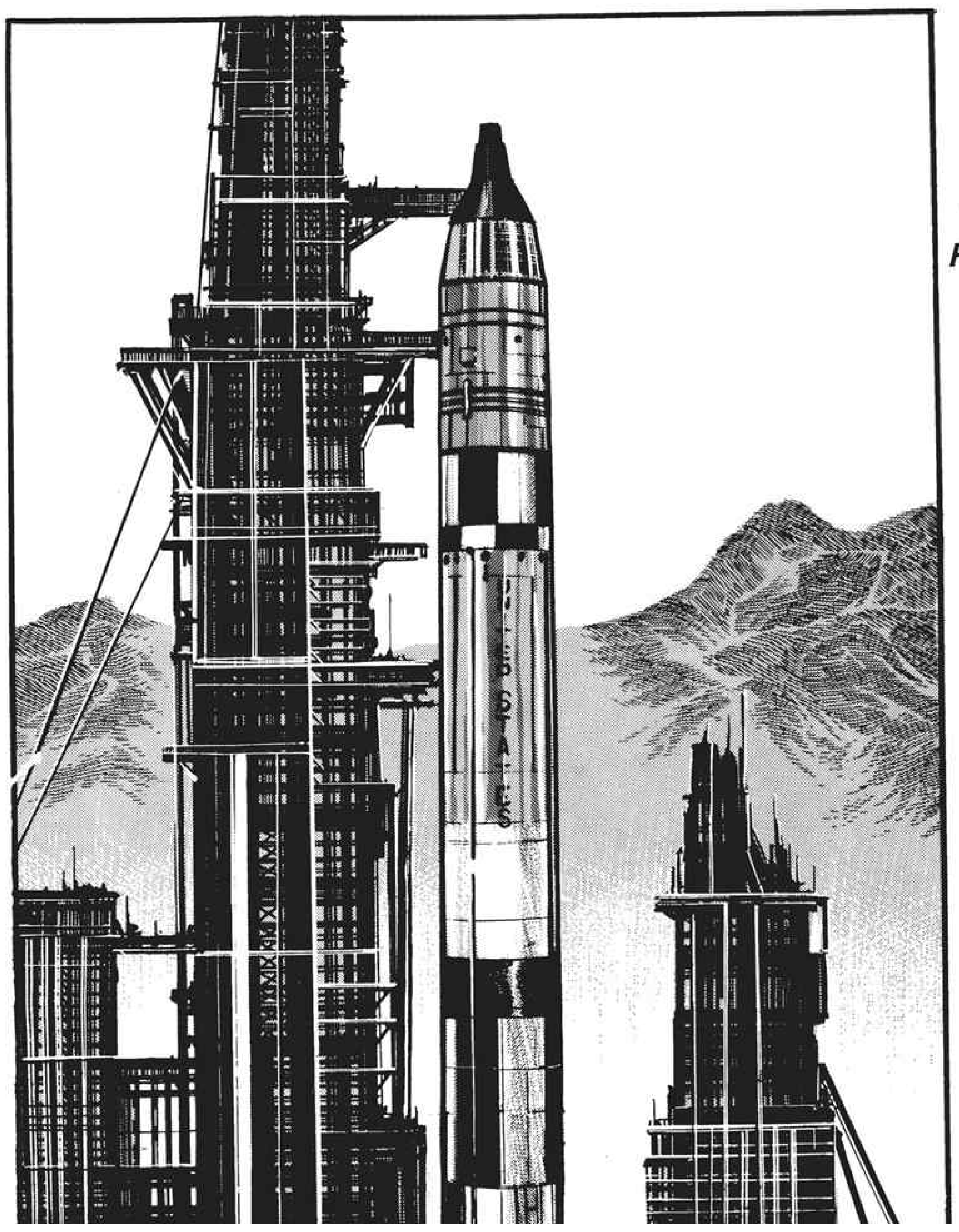

YOU'RE GONNA LOSE THE GUN ONCE YOU FIRE. MUZZLE VELOCITY'S 3250 FEET PER SECOND. IT'S GONNA FLY AWAY, AND YOU BETTER LET IT.
BUT THE RECOIL *WILL* DAMPEN...JUST ENOUGH FOR ACCURACY.
THAT'S JUST WHAT I ASKED FOR.
SAFETY'S HERE. SCOPE'S NOW ON THE SIDE OF THE COMPENSATOR.
I SET IT UP SO YOU CAN USE SIGHT SQUARE ON THE SHIP'S DOCKING ADAPTER, LIKE A BIG BULL'S-EYE. FROM YOUR INTENDED RANGE, THAT WILL THEN PUT YOUR SHOT ON TARGET...THE VALVE ASSEMBLY ONE METER TO THE RIGHT.
ARMOR-PIERCING ROUND.
SAY, HOW MUCH *ARE* THEY PAYING YOU?
......


THIS IS G... GET THE HELICOPTER READY...
...AND THE JET.
SEE YA!
WHUMP


ZZZZZ
……

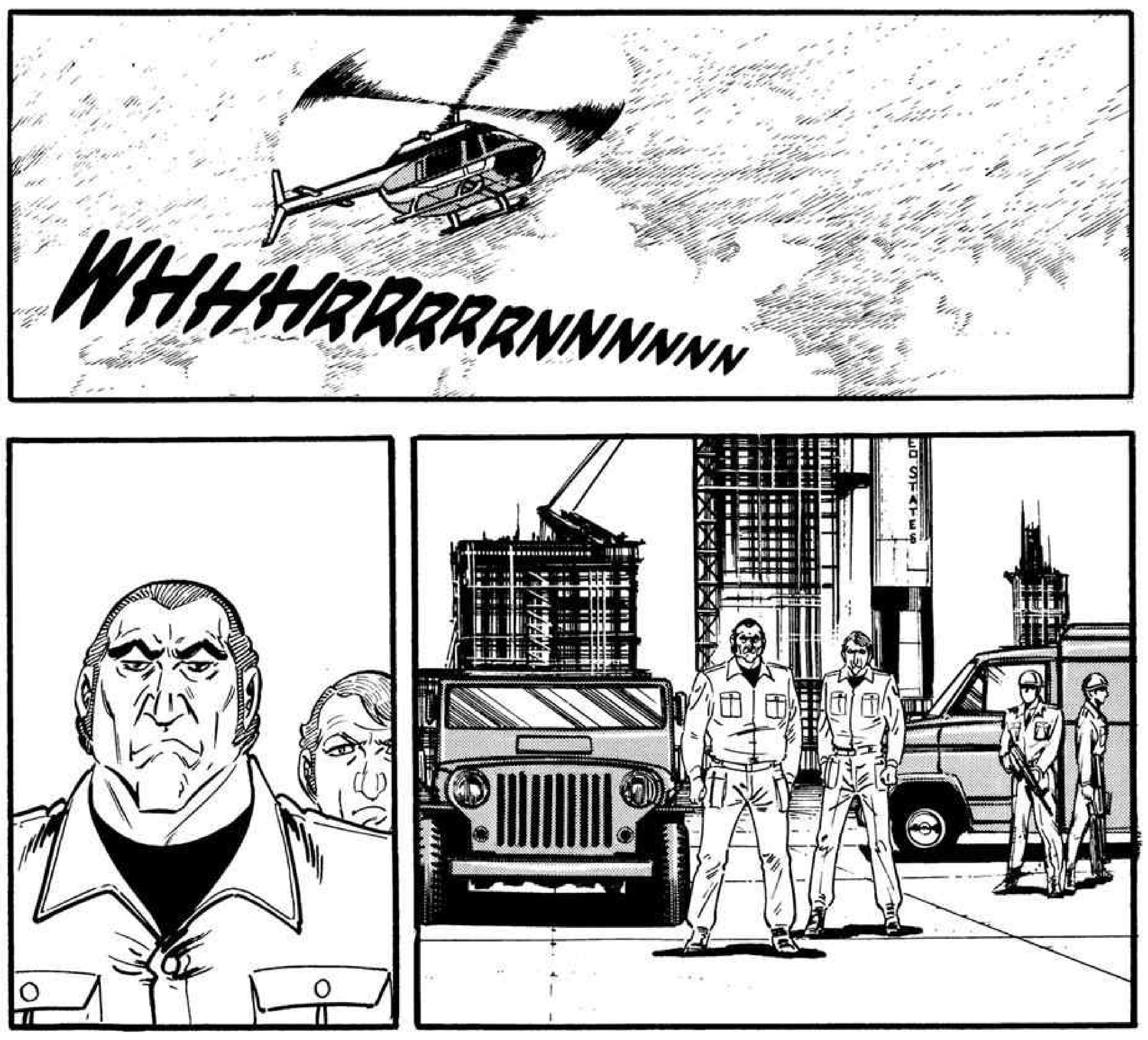
WHUKKAH WHUKK WAKK HUKKA
whun
whun
whuuuuuunn
VVVVRRRRRMMMMMMM

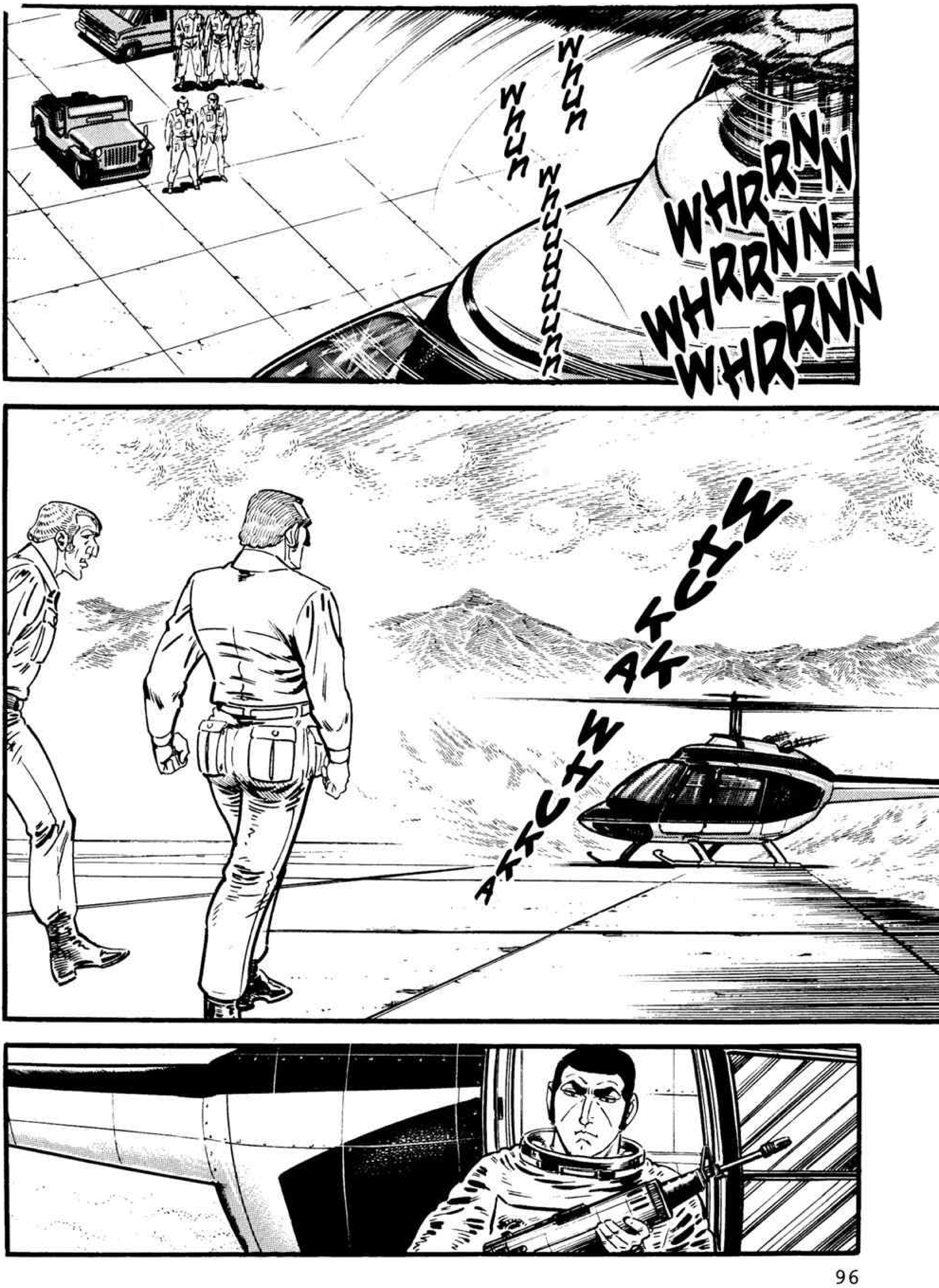

Vandenberg AFB, California - July 14th, 7:00 AM



PART 13

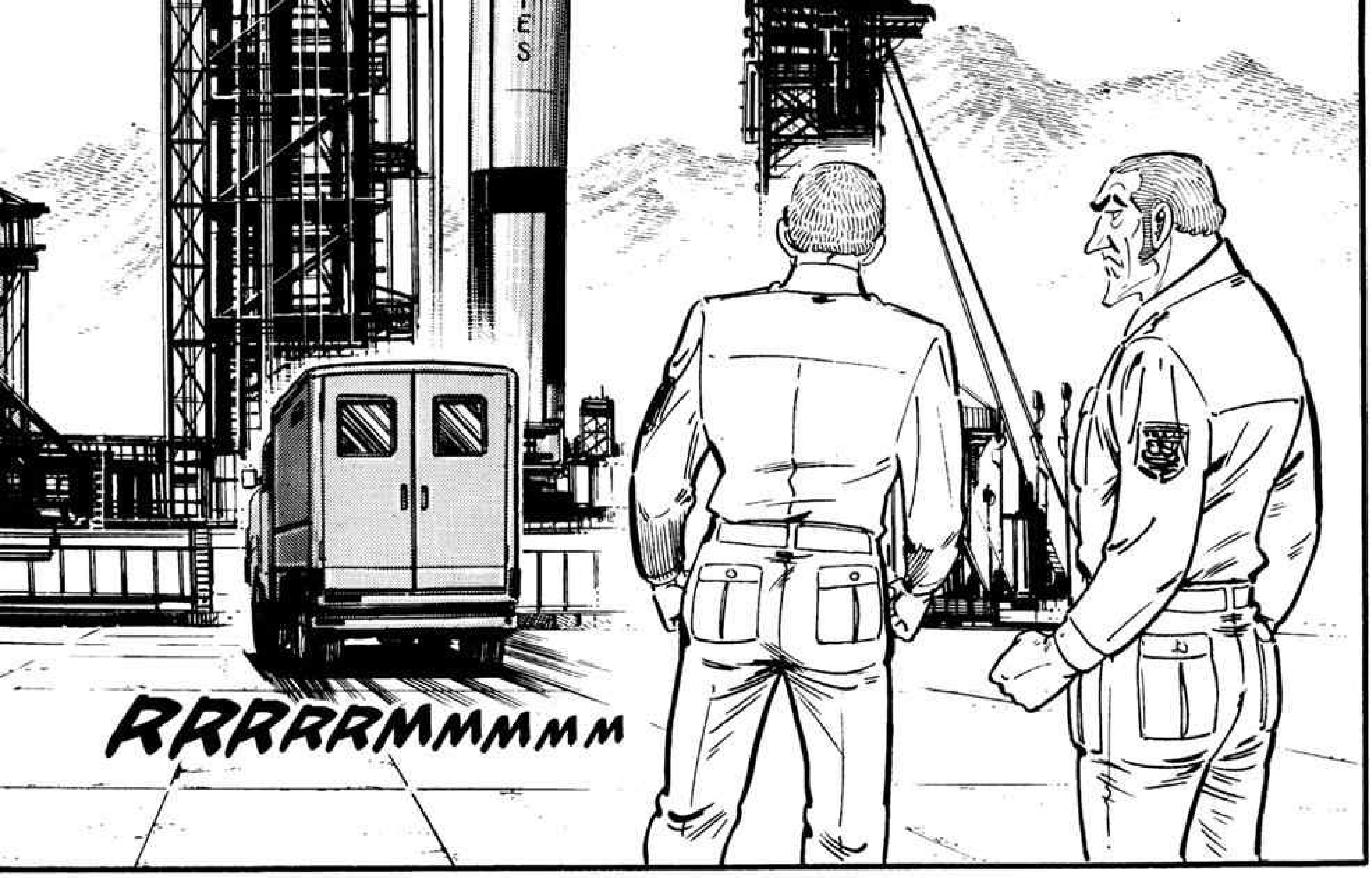
PLAN G

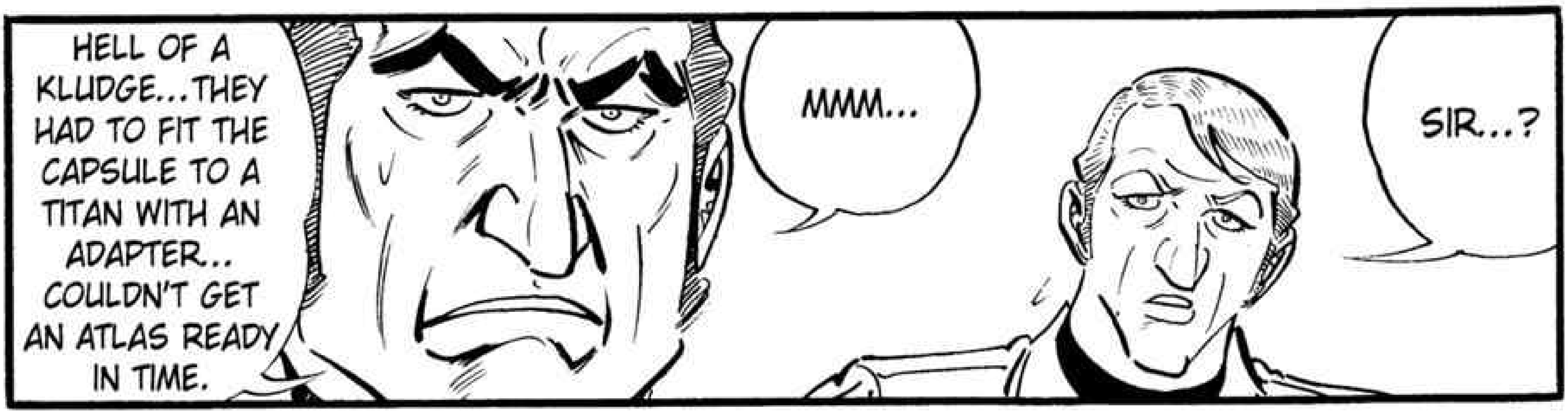

WHHHRRRRRRNNNNNNN

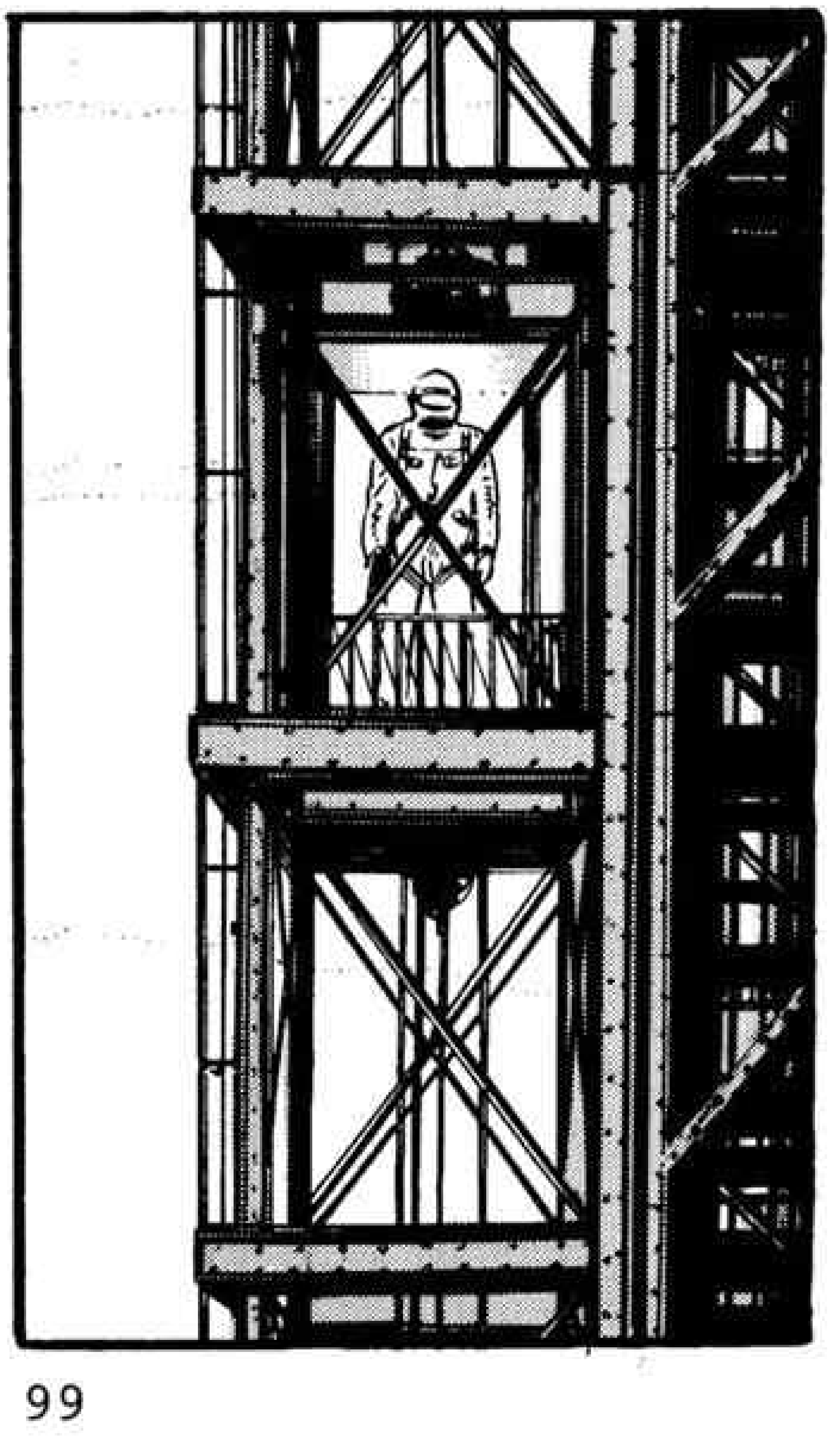

WHRRNN
WHRRNN
WHRRNN
WHRRNN
whun
whun
whuuuuuunn
WHUKKA
WHUKKA

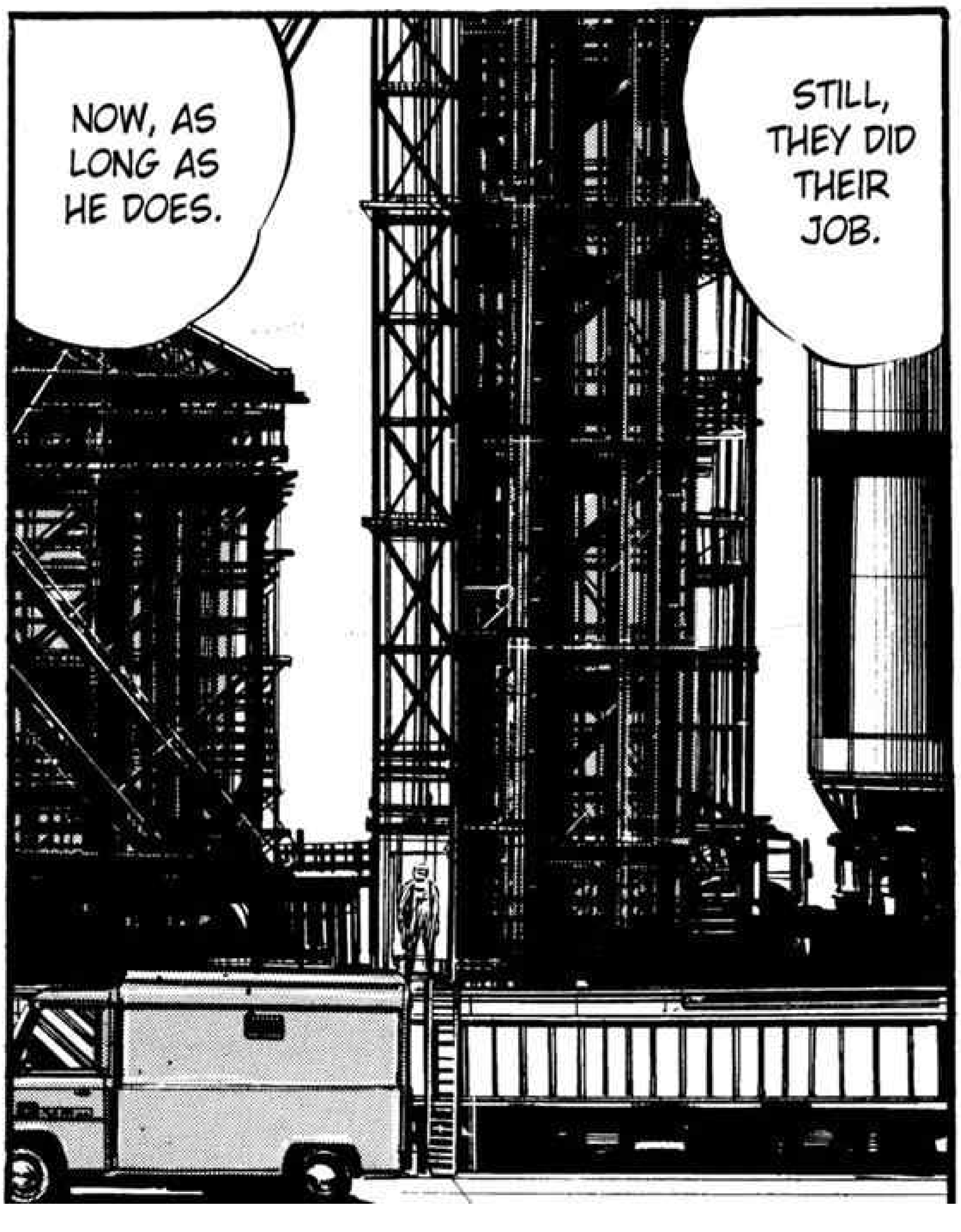
……
YOU'RE NOT ON STAFF, GENERAL.
HOLD IT. JUST ONE THING.
WHERE YOU HAVE MONEY, I HAVE DUTY. AND I KNOW MINE.
SO… ARE YOU READY?
……
UNITED STATES

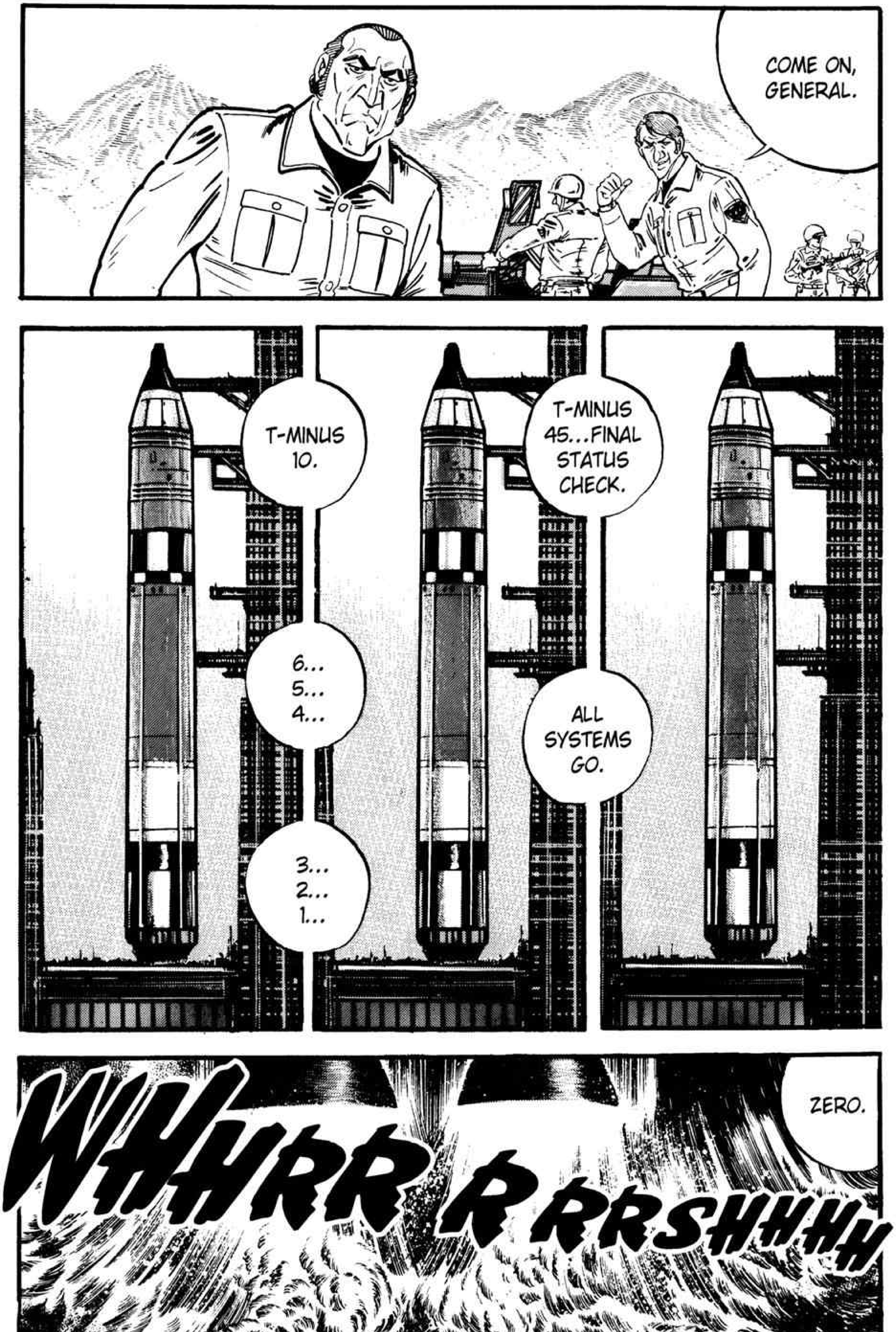
VVRRRRMMMM
WE'RE GO.

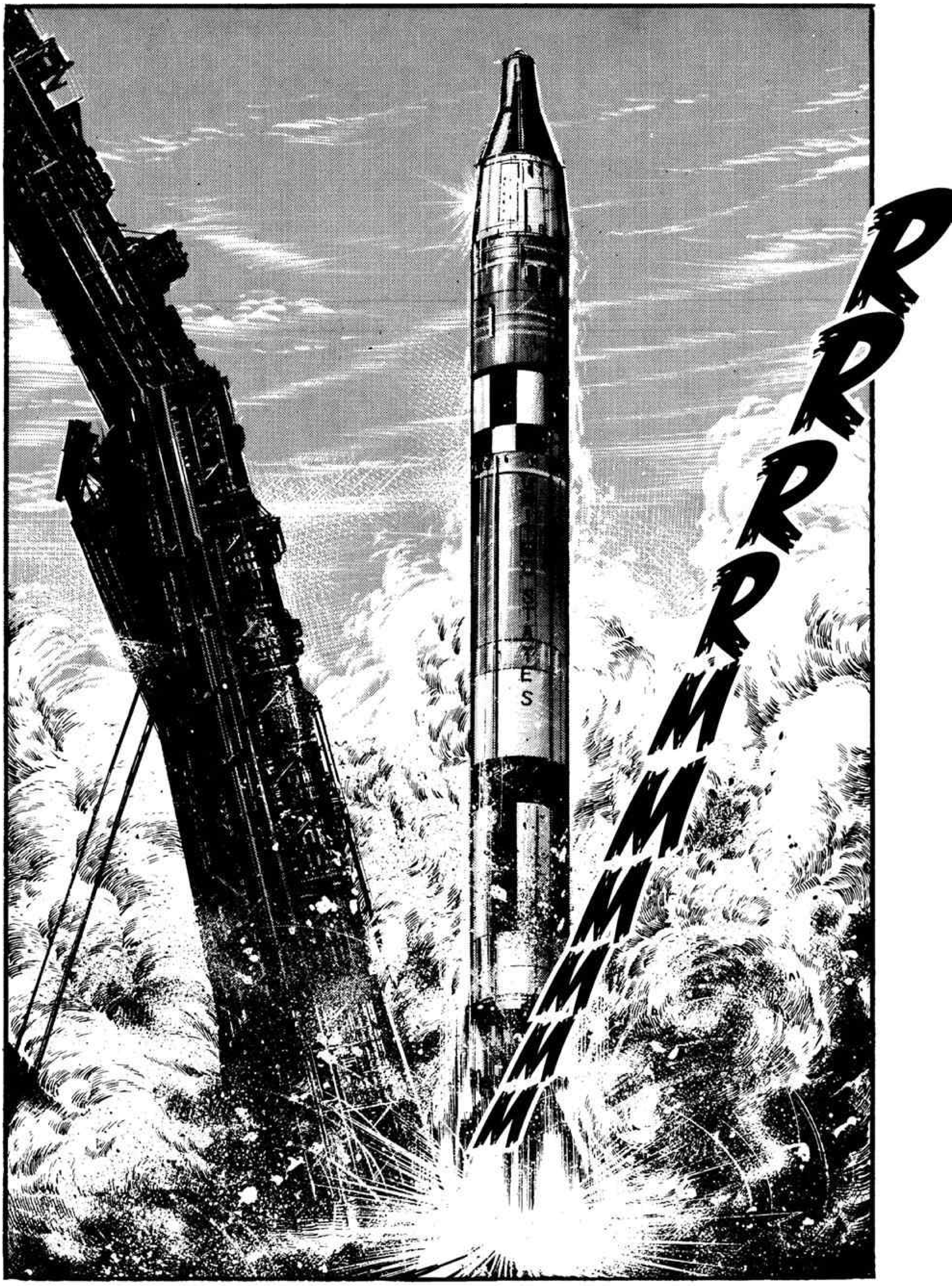

RRRRRMMMMM


HELL OF A KLUDGE...THEY HAD TO FIT THE CAPSULE TO A TITAN WITH AN ADAPTER... COULDN'T GET AN ATLAS READY IN TIME.
MMM...
SIR...?

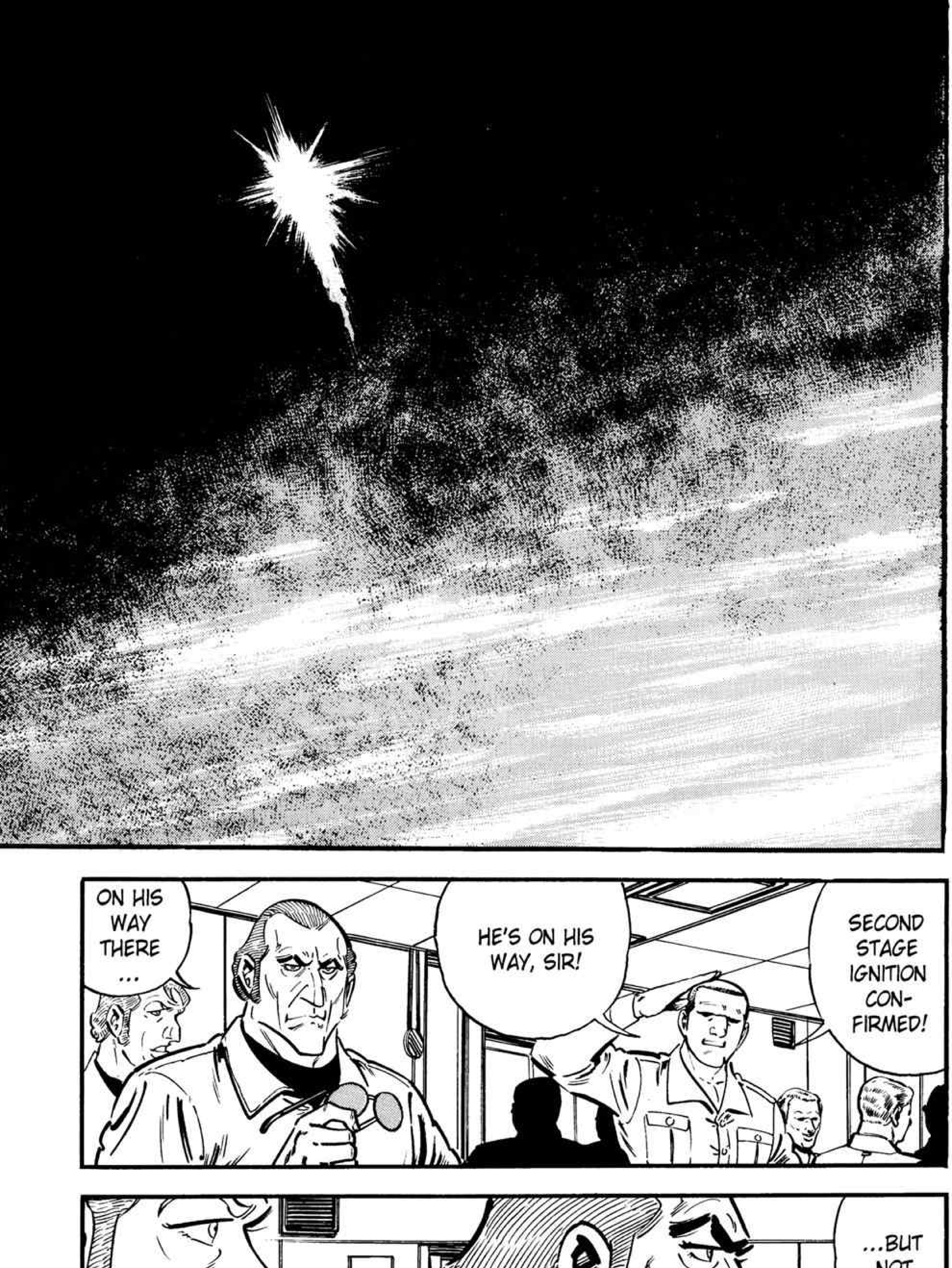


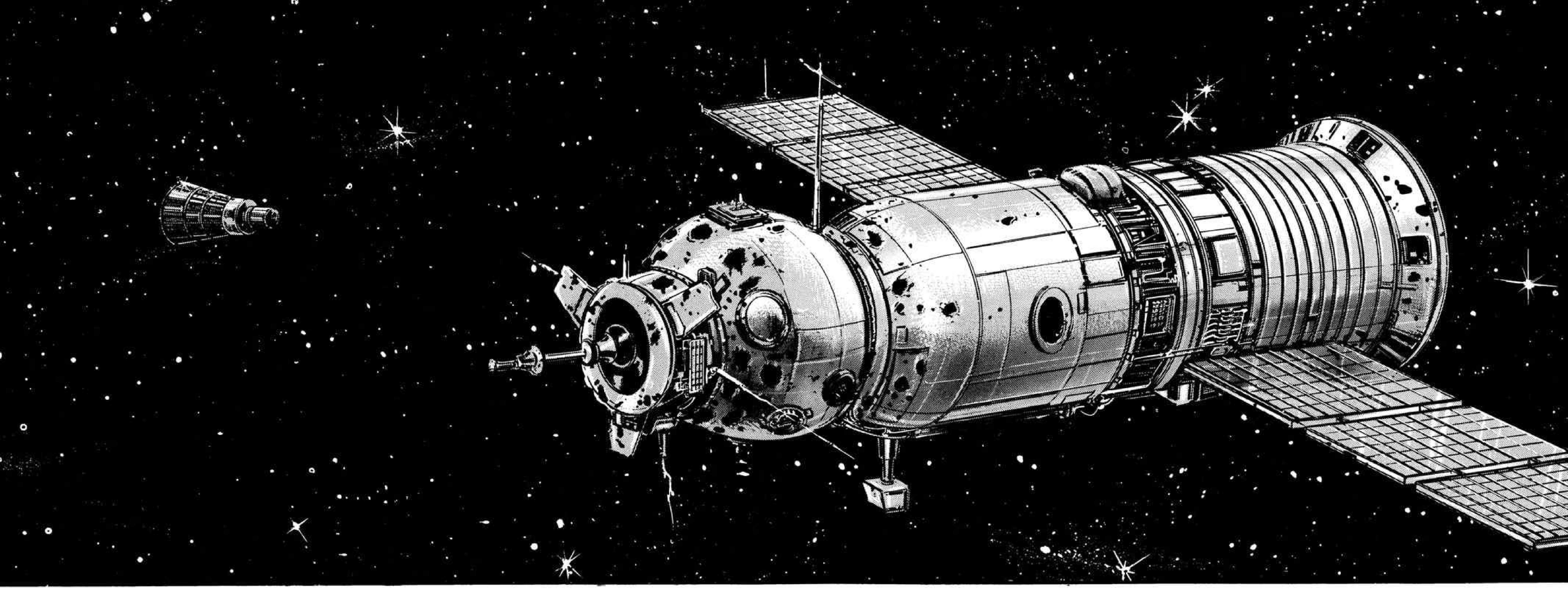

STILL, THEY DID THEIR JOB.
NOW, AS LONG AS HE DOES.


COME ON, GENERAL.
T-MINUS 45...FINAL STATUS CHECK.
ALL SYSTEMS GO.
T-MINUS 10.
6... 5... 4...
3... 2... 1...
ZERO.
WHHRR R RRSHHHH

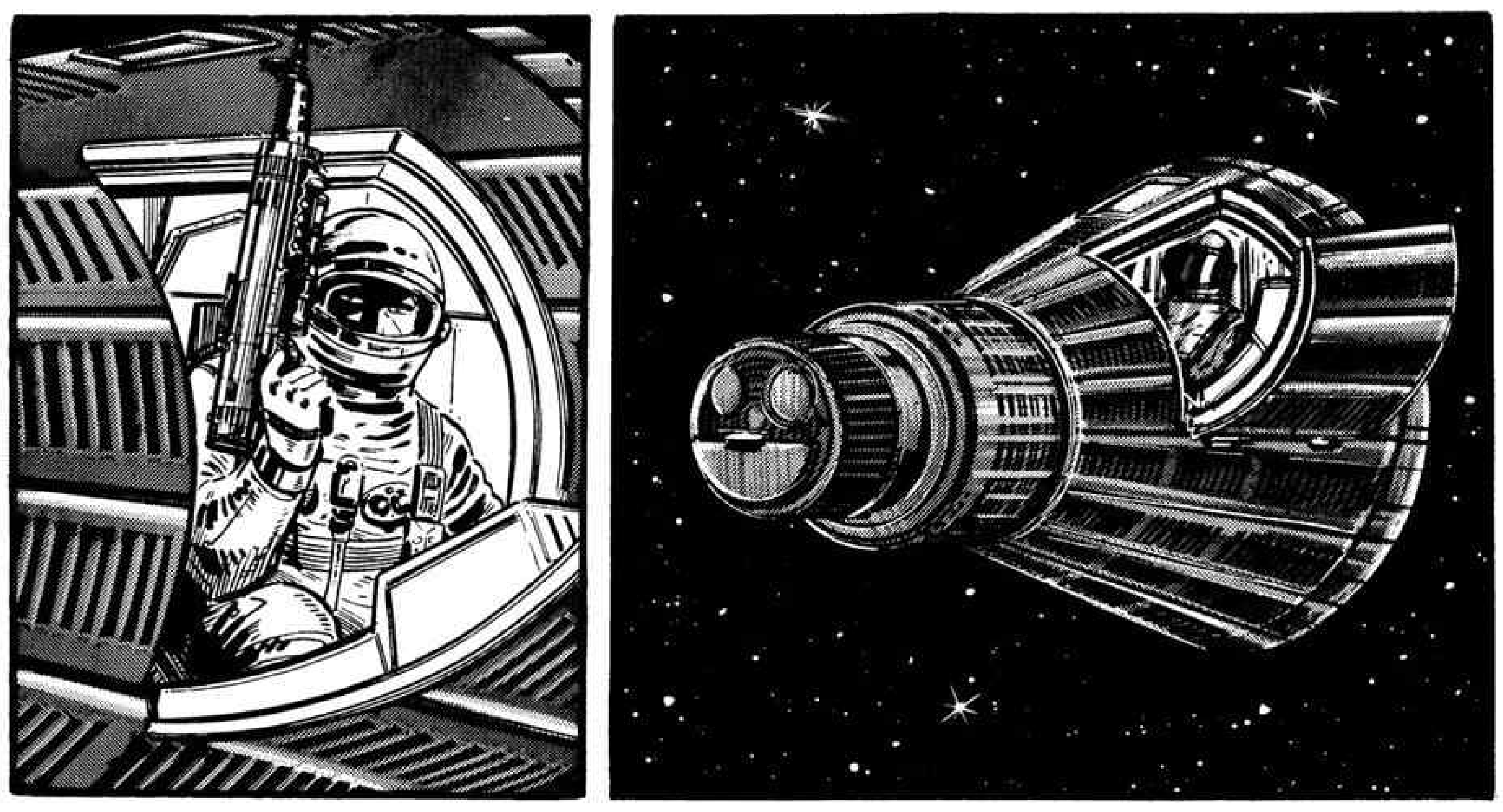

RRRRRMMMMMMMMM
STATES

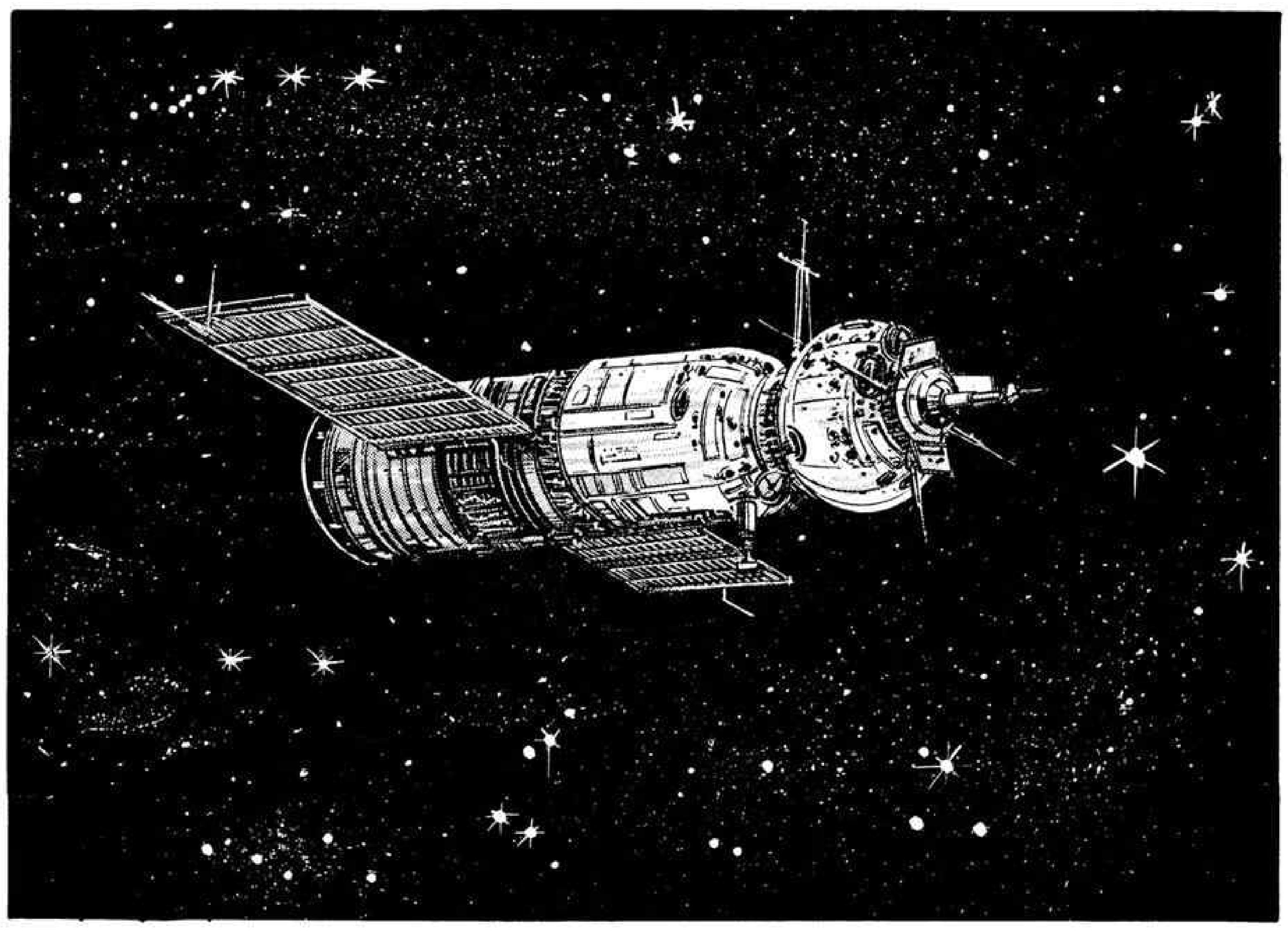
UNITED STATES
RRRRRMMMMMM

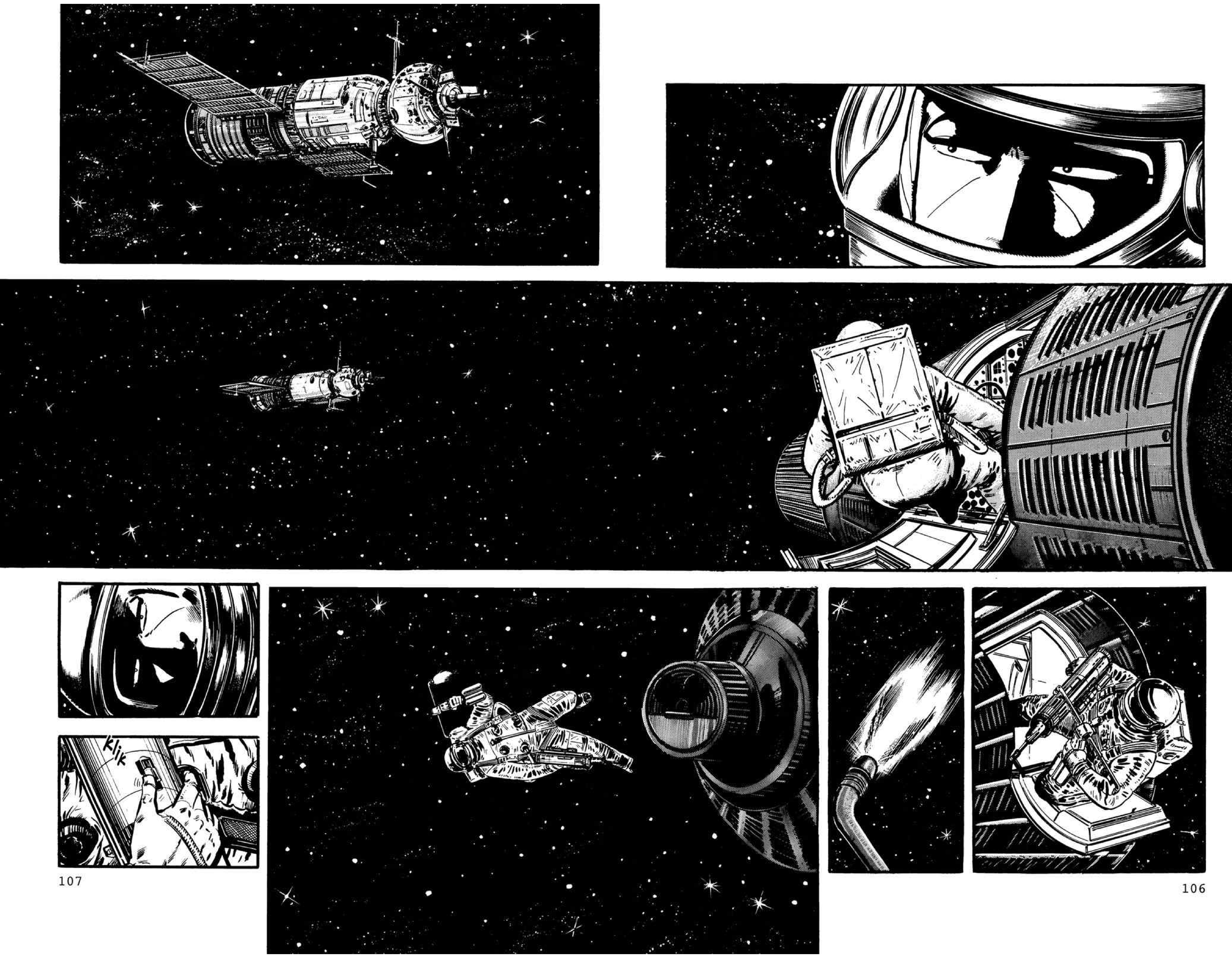

SECOND STAGE IGNITION CONFIRMED!
HE'S ON HIS WAY, SIR!
ON HIS WAY THERE ...
...BUT NOT BACK.

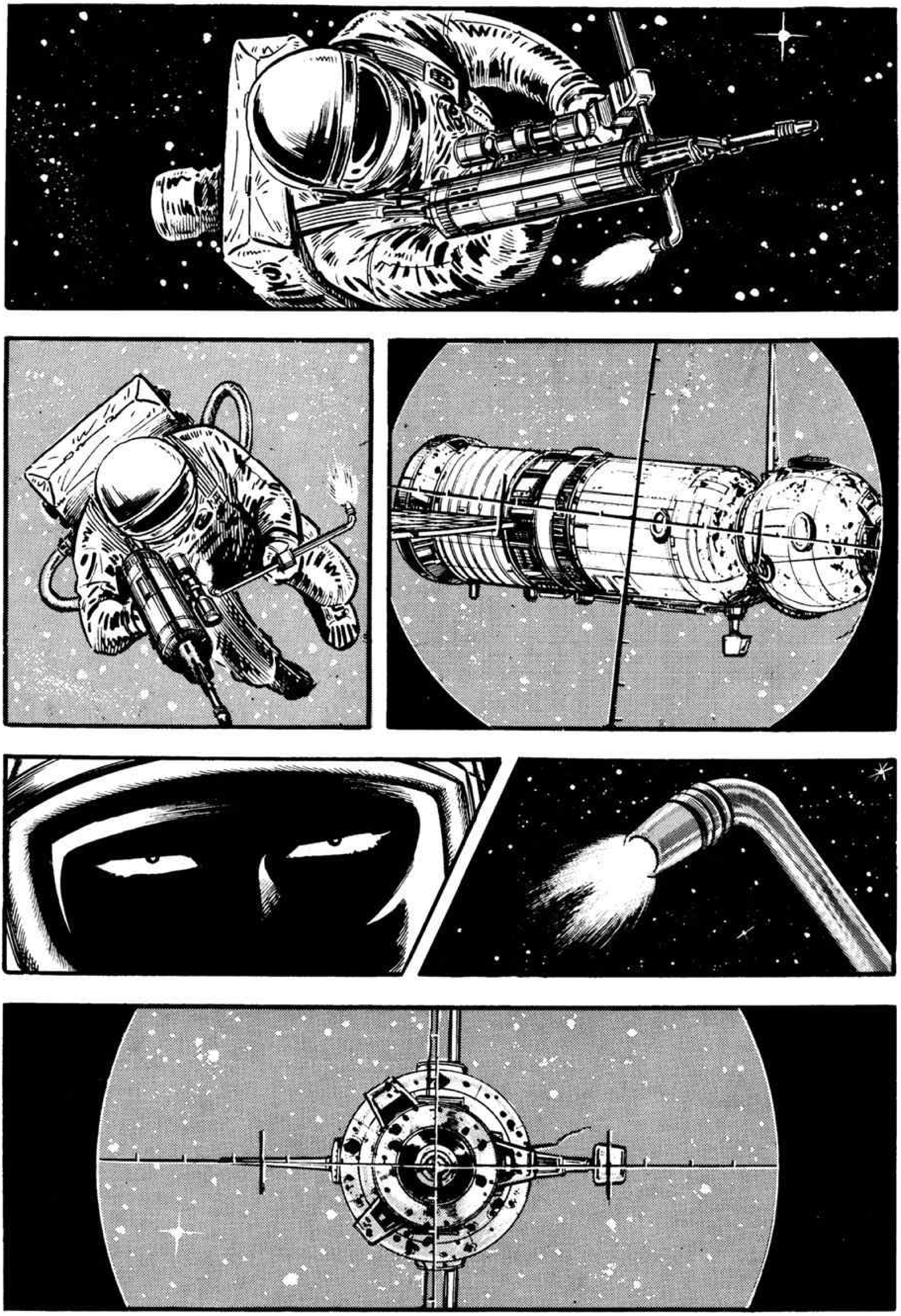


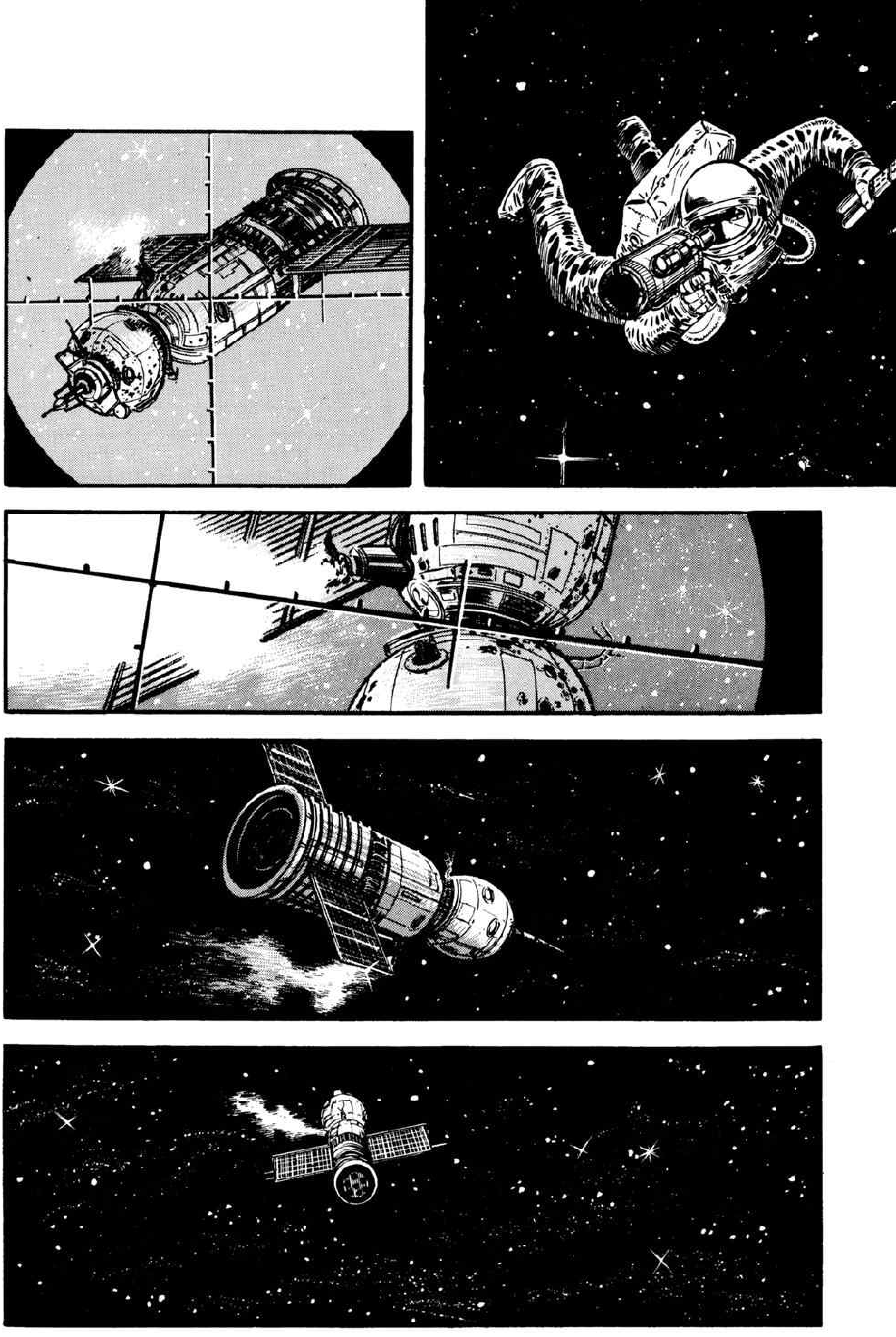
PART 14 SNIPE IN THE ORBIT

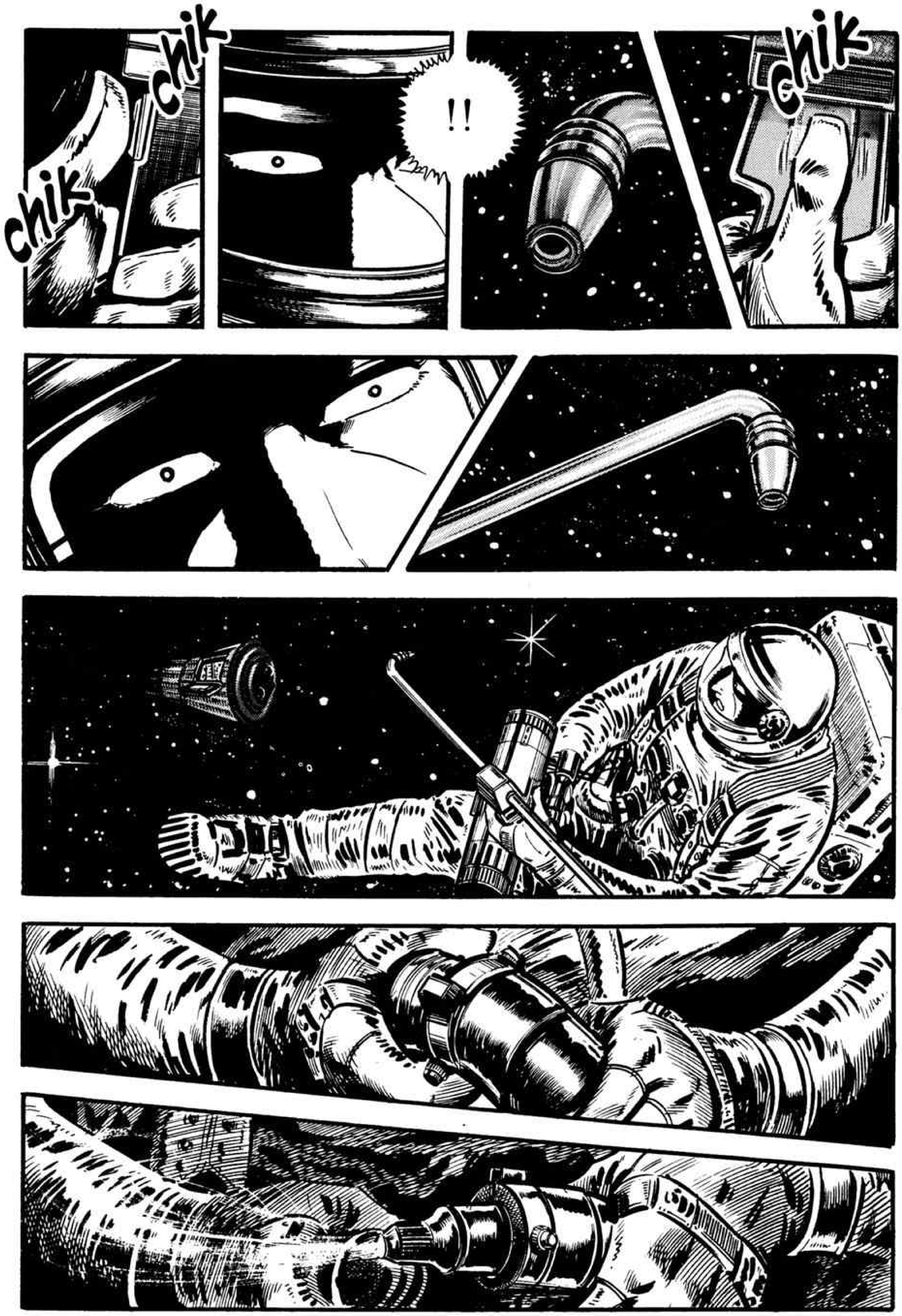


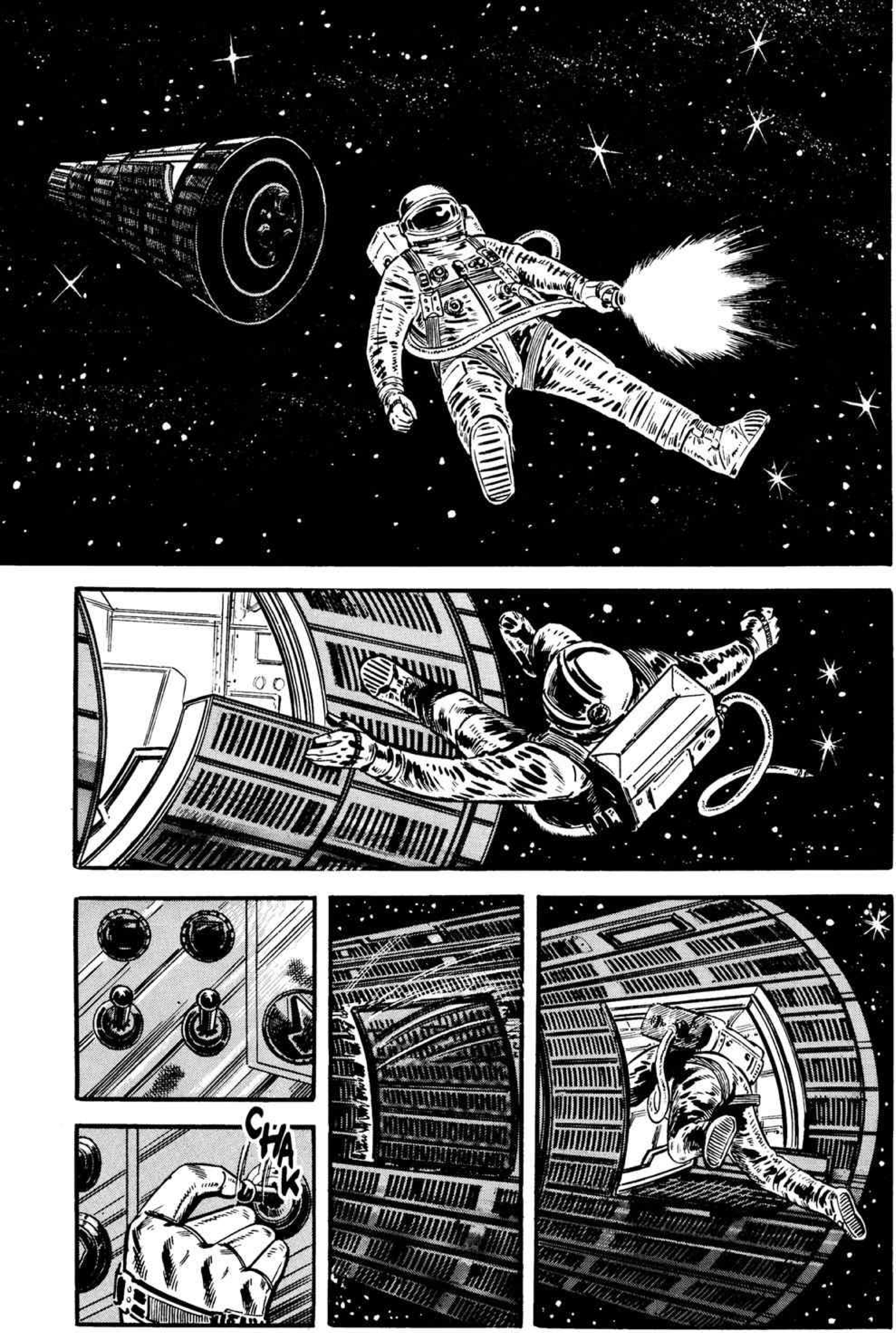






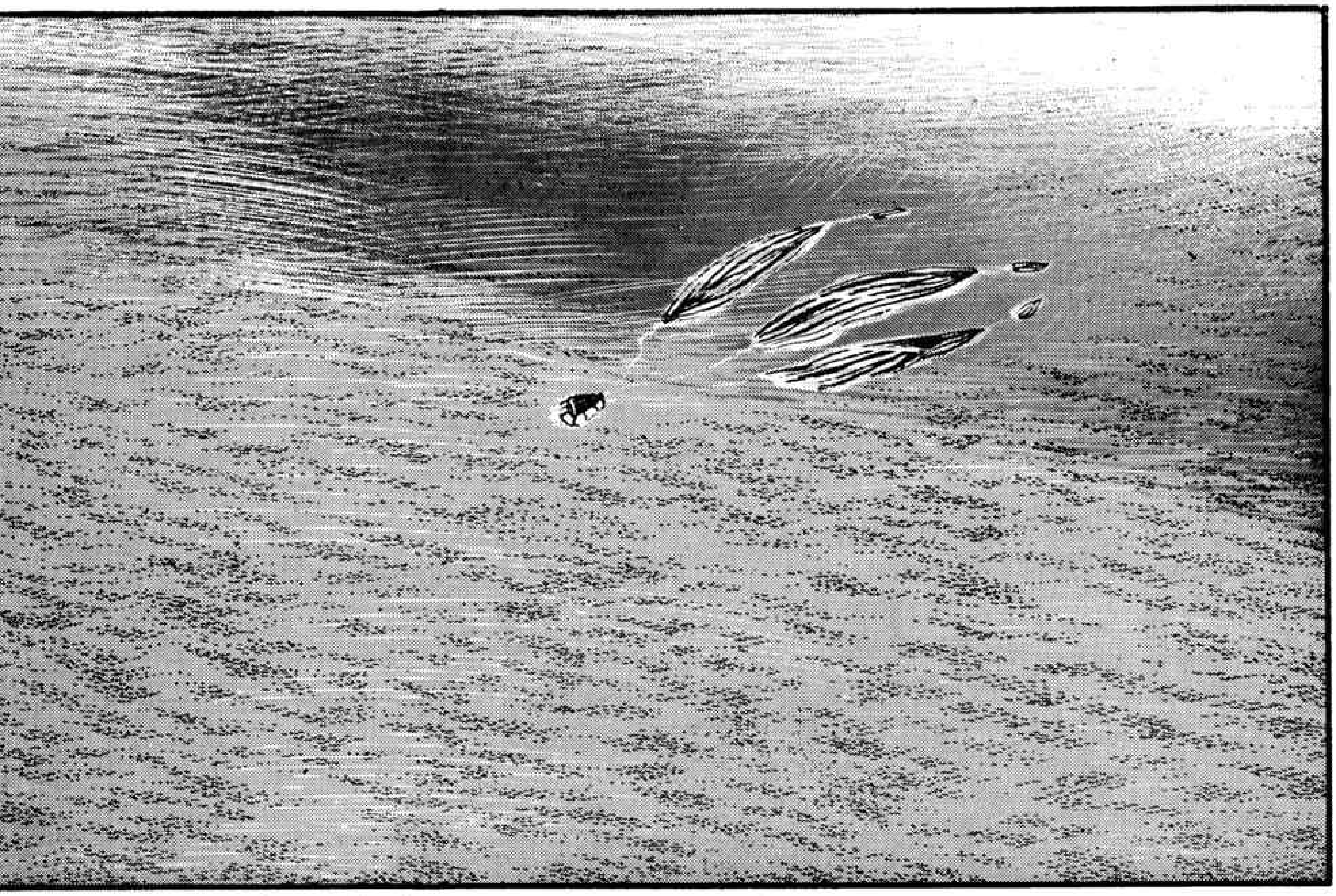


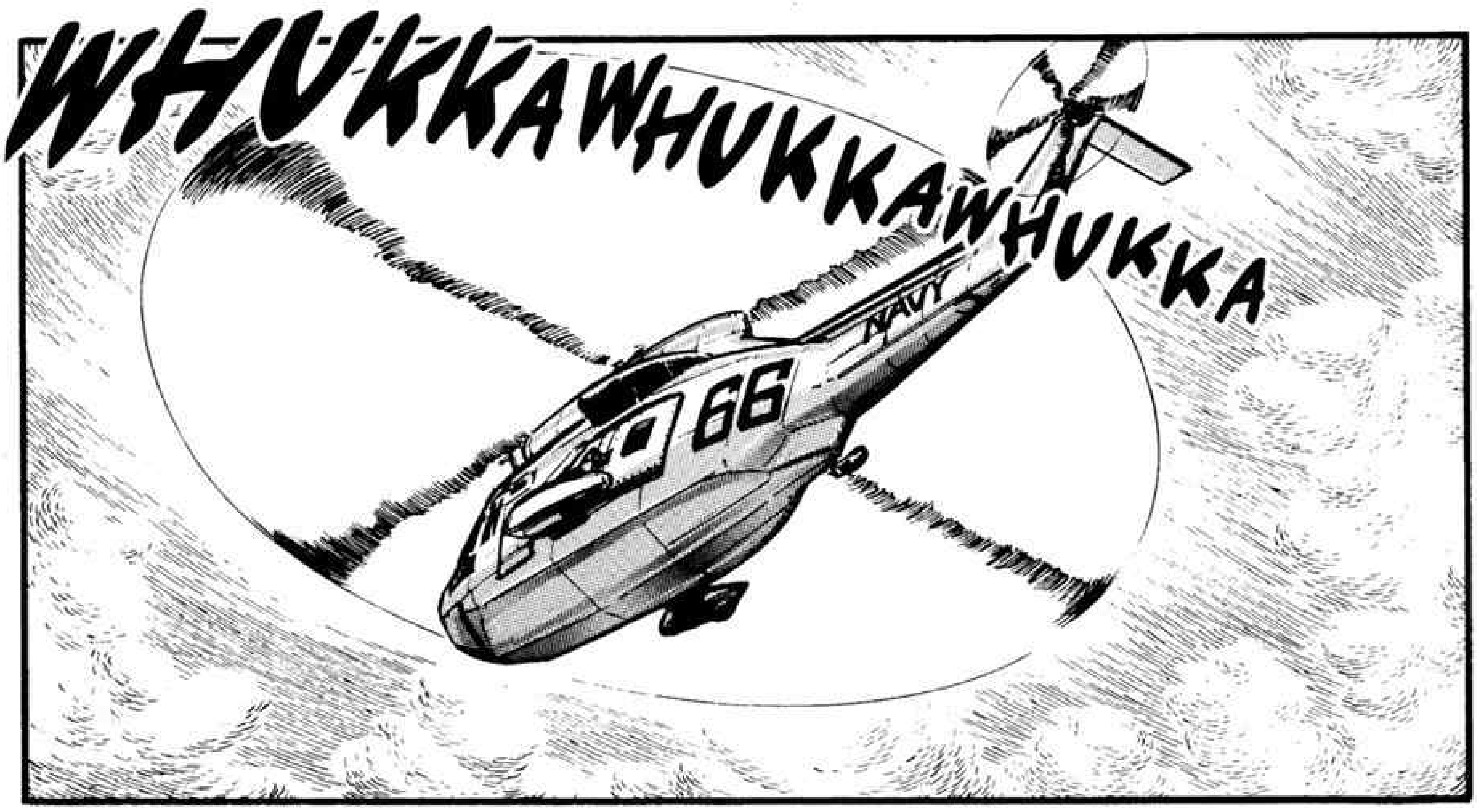

chik
chik
!!
chik


CHAK

hahn
hahn
hahn
hahn
hahhhhhn
hahhhhhn
……

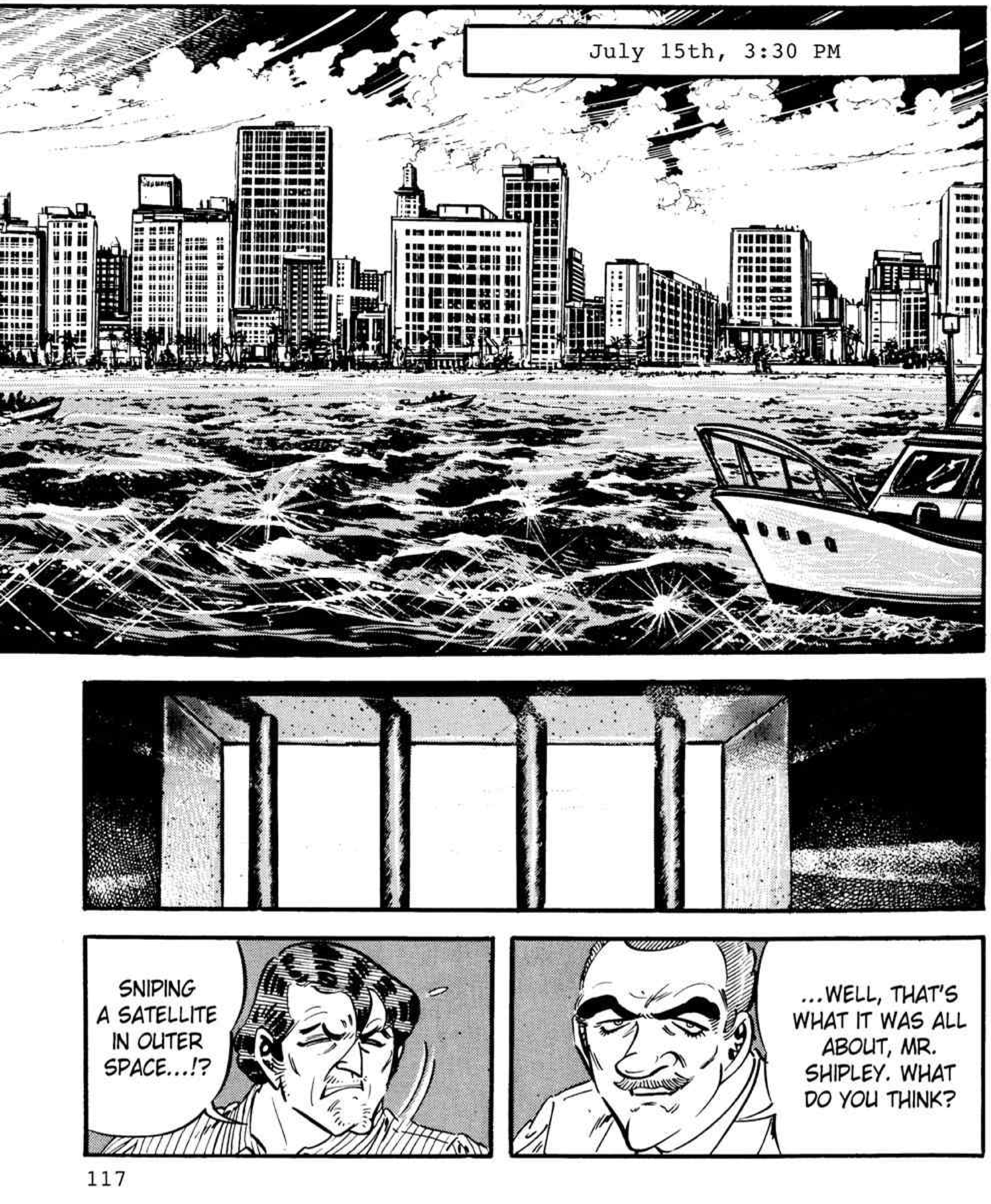
PART 15 NO RECOVERY

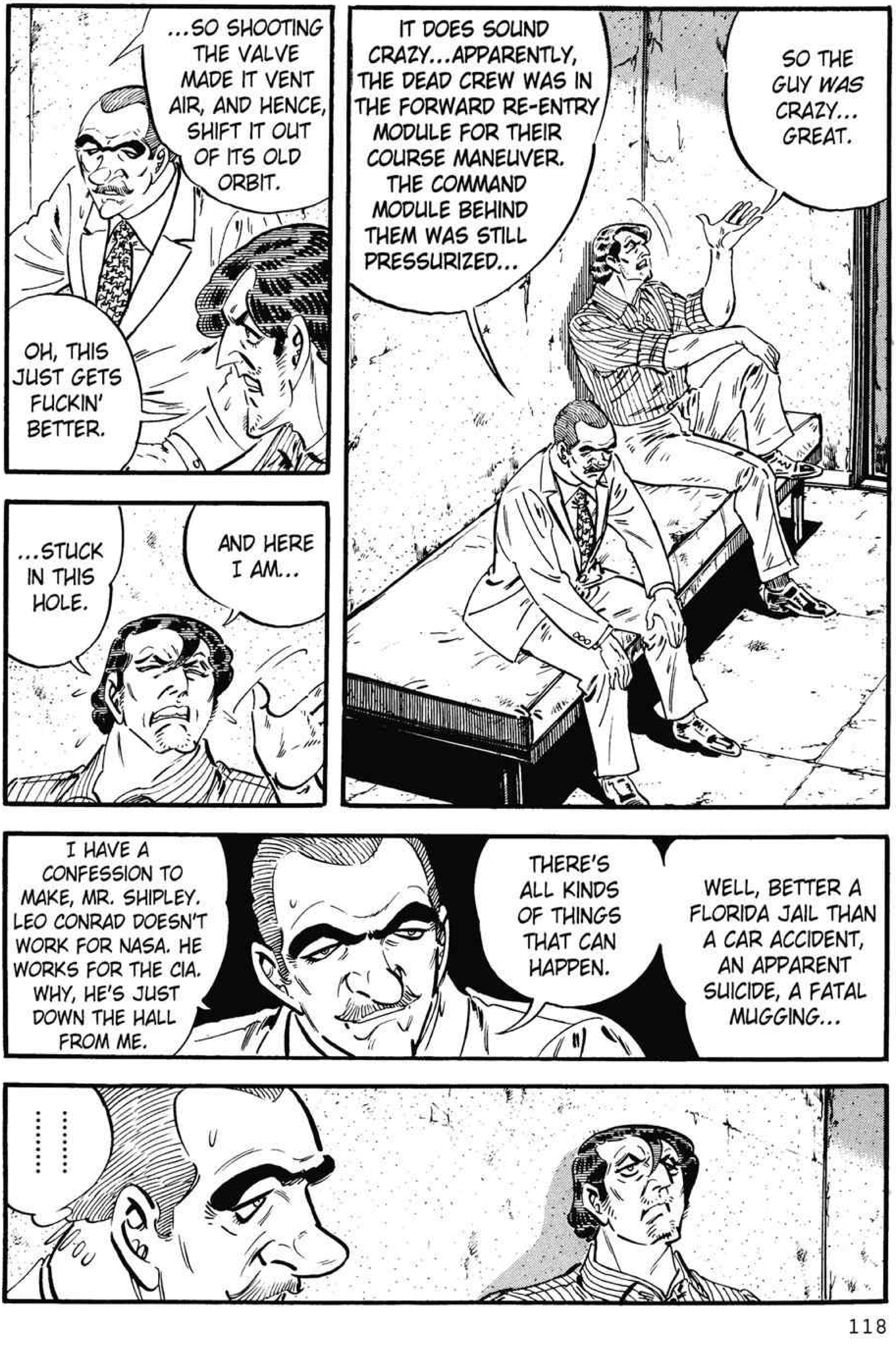



WHUKKAWHUKKAWHUKKA
NAVY
66

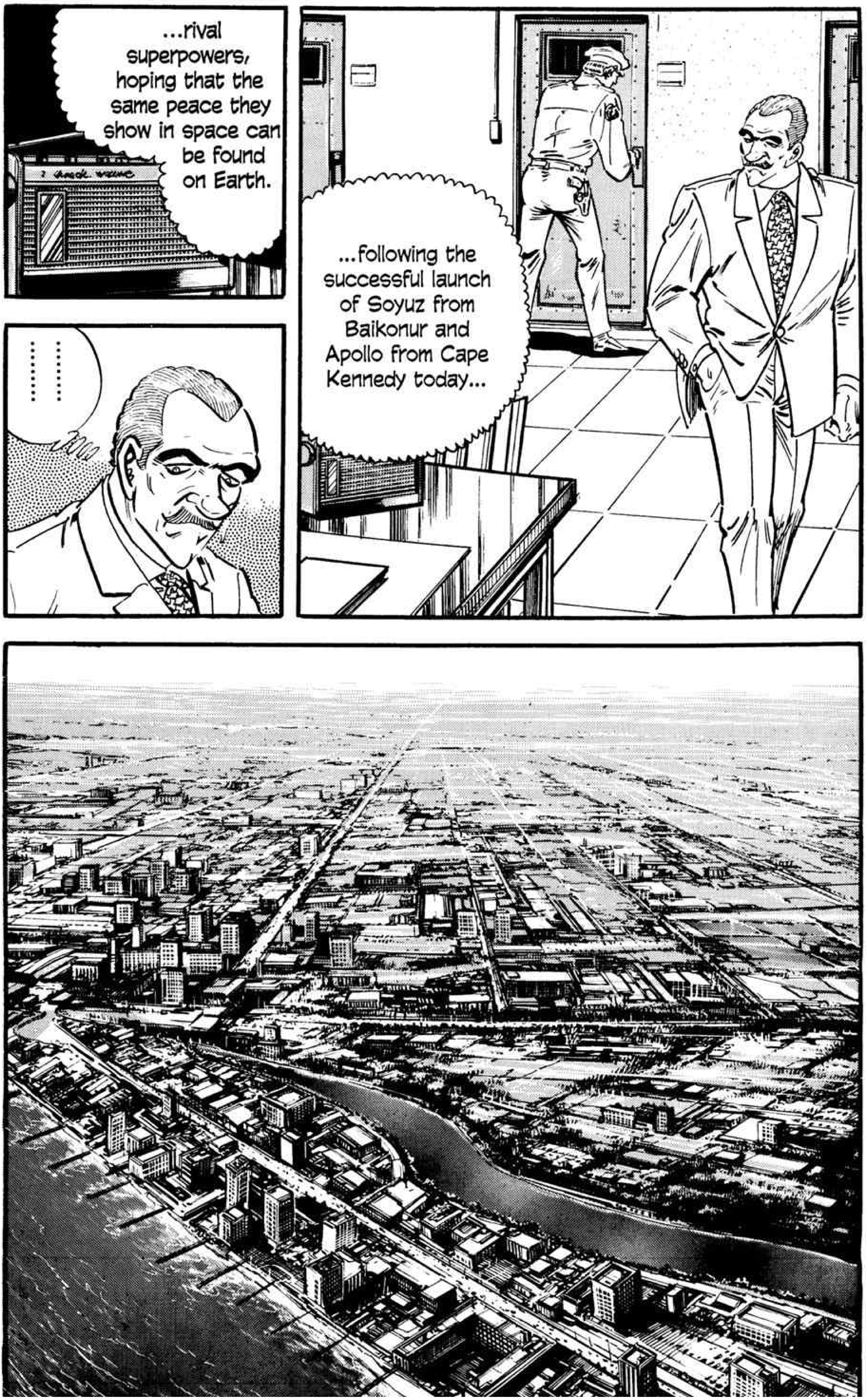
CAPSULE LOCATED... HATCH IS OPEN... I SEE NO SIGN OF PILOT...
WHHRRRRRRRRR
NO RECOVERY... REPEAT, NO RECOVERY...

PART 16 THE BIG SCOOP

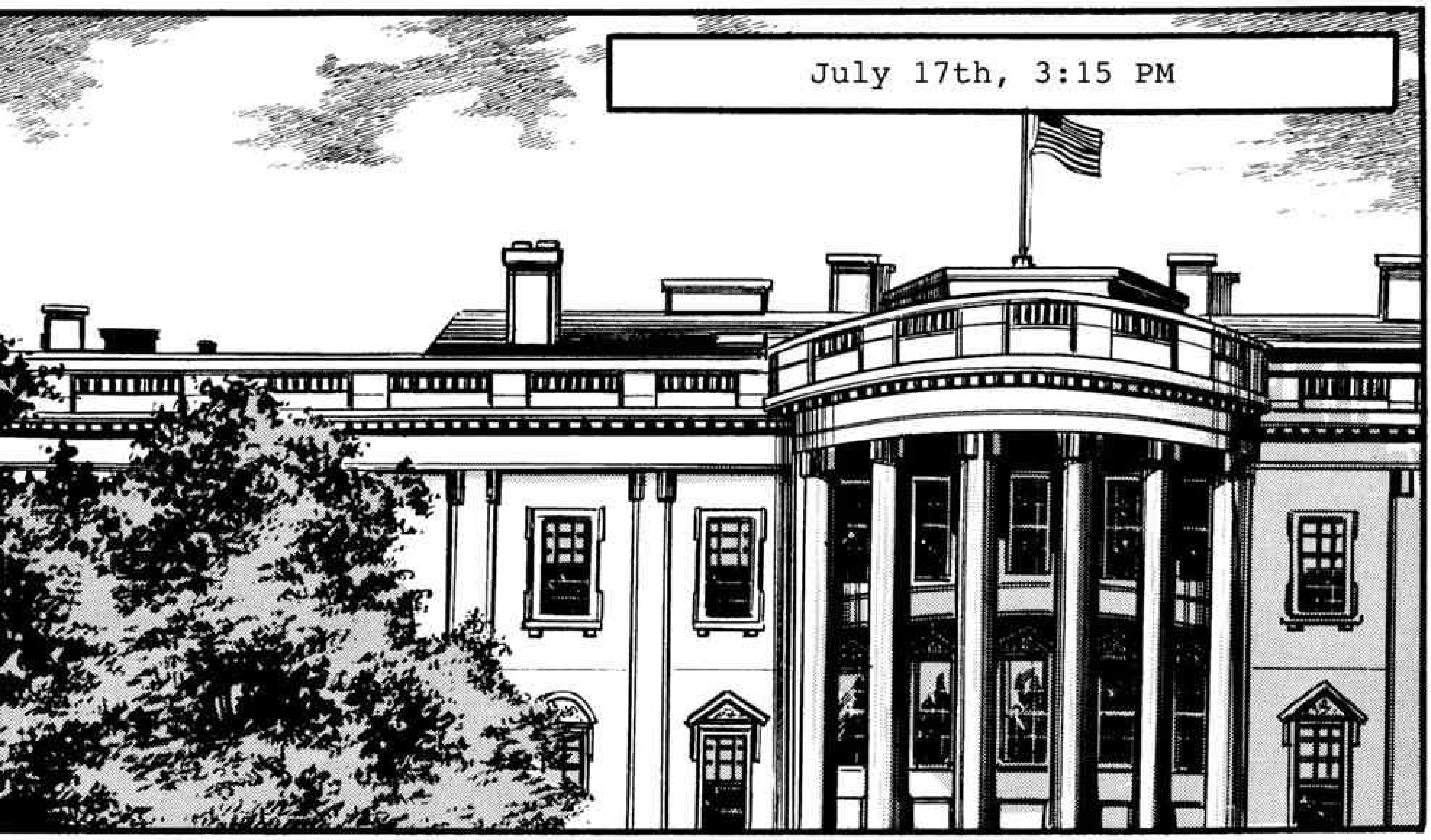

July 15th, 3:30 PM
SNIPING A SATELLITE IN OUTER SPACE...!?
...WELL, THAT'S WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT, MR. SHIPLEY. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

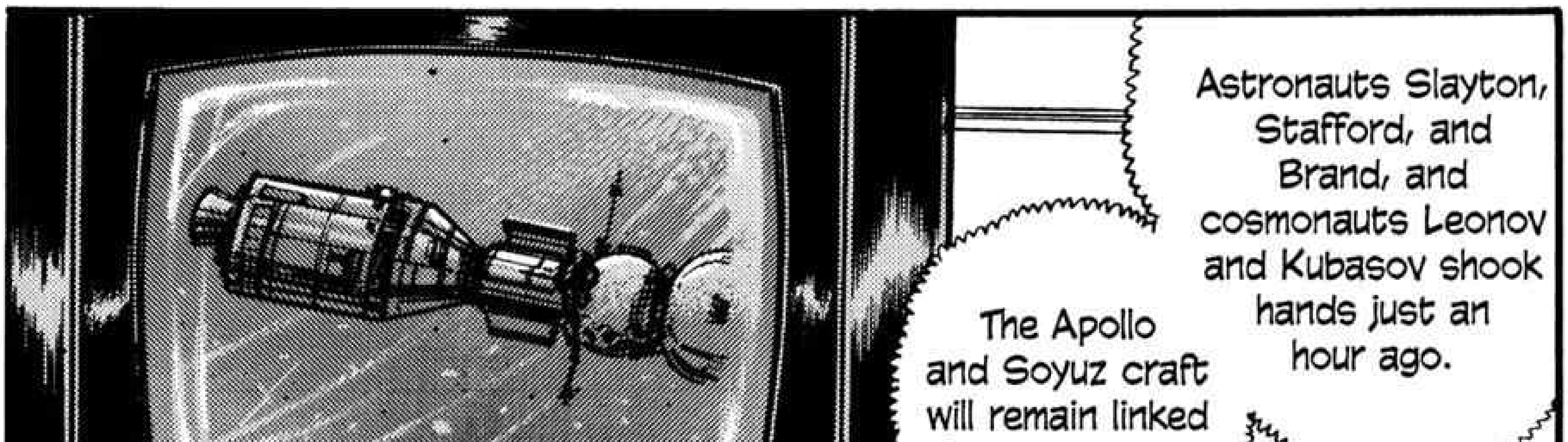

SO THE GUY *WAS* CRAZY... GREAT.
IT DOES SOUND CRAZY...APPARENTLY, THE DEAD CREW WAS IN THE FORWARD RE-ENTRY MODULE FOR THEIR COURSE MANEUVER. THE COMMAND MODULE BEHIND THEM WAS STILL PRESSURIZED...
...SO SHOOTING THE VALVE MADE IT VENT AIR, AND HENCE, SHIFT IT OUT OF ITS OLD ORBIT.
OH, THIS JUST GETS FUCKIN' BETTER.
AND HERE I AM...
...STUCK IN THIS HOLE.
WELL, BETTER A FLORIDA JAIL THAN A CAR ACCIDENT, AN APPARENT SUICIDE, A FATAL MUGGING...
THERE'S ALL KINDS OF THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN.
I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE, MR. SHIPLEY. LEO CONRAD DOESN'T WORK FOR NASA. HE WORKS FOR THE CIA. WHY, HE'S JUST DOWN THE HALL FROM ME.
......

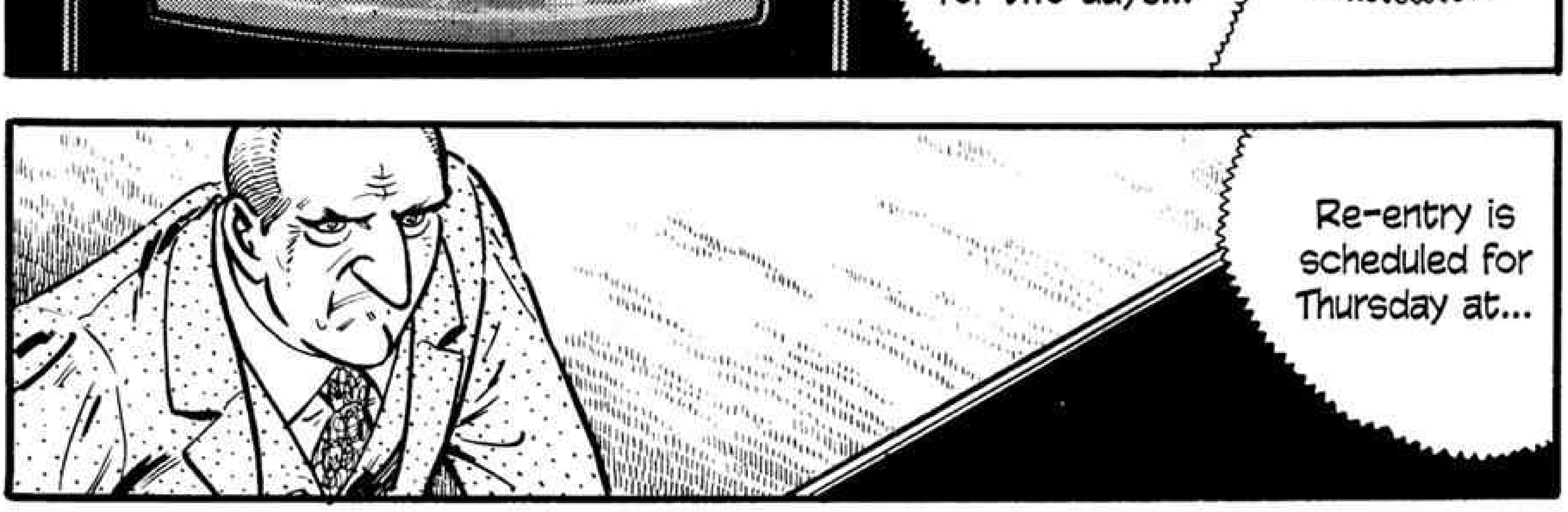
WELL, I'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK PILED UP, BACK AT THE OFFICE...
...AND I HEAR LEO'S ALREADY MADE A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY.
HEY--WAIT! WHAT ABOUT *ME?!*
HMM... YES, WHAT ABOUT YOU...
SHIT...
FORGET I ASKED.
THAT PRETTY YOUNG LADY WITH THE TORN DRESS WILL BE HERE IN AN HOUR WITH A BRAND NEW SUMMER FROCK. IT SEEMS IT WAS ALL A MISUNDERSTANDING...
...AND YOU'LL BE FREE TO GO.
TH-THANKS, MAN...

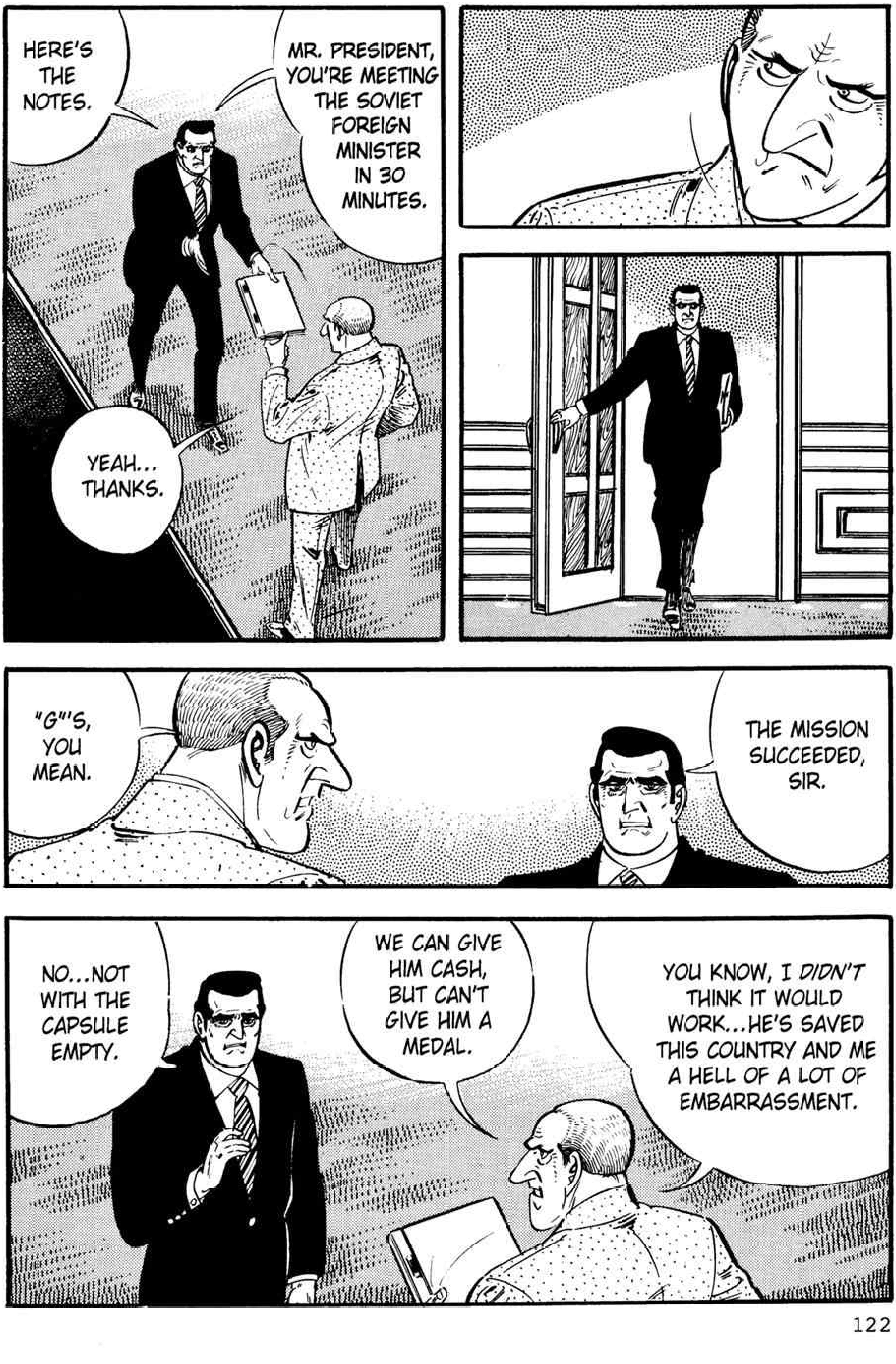

...following the successful launch of Soyuz from Baikonur and Apollo from Cape Kennedy today...
...rival superpowers, hoping that the same peace they show in space can be found on Earth.
……

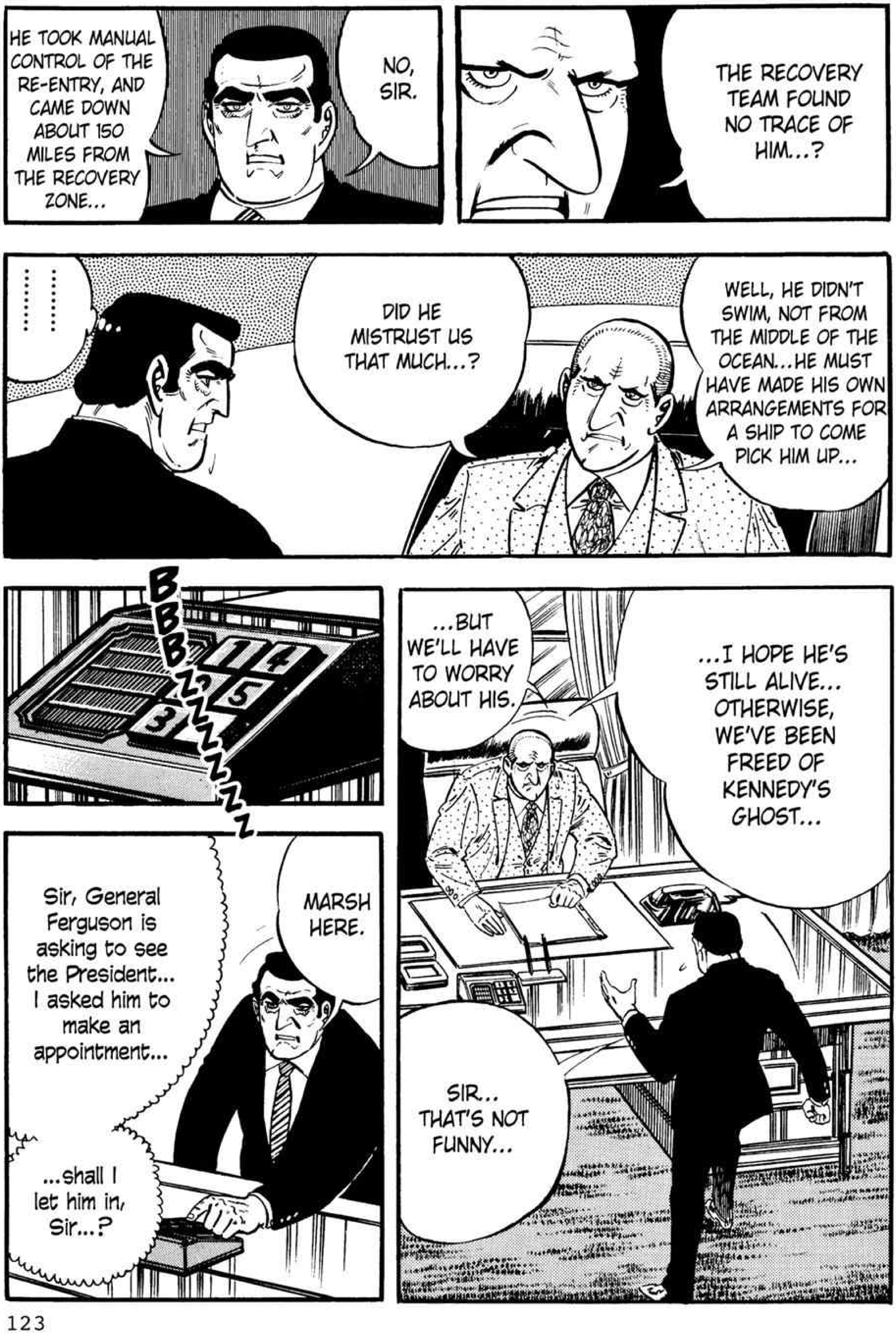
PART 17 FINAL REPORT


July 17th, 3:15 PM


Astronauts Slayton, Stafford, and Brand, and cosmonauts Leonov and Kubasov shook hands just an hour ago.
The Apollo and Soyuz craft will remain linked for two days...

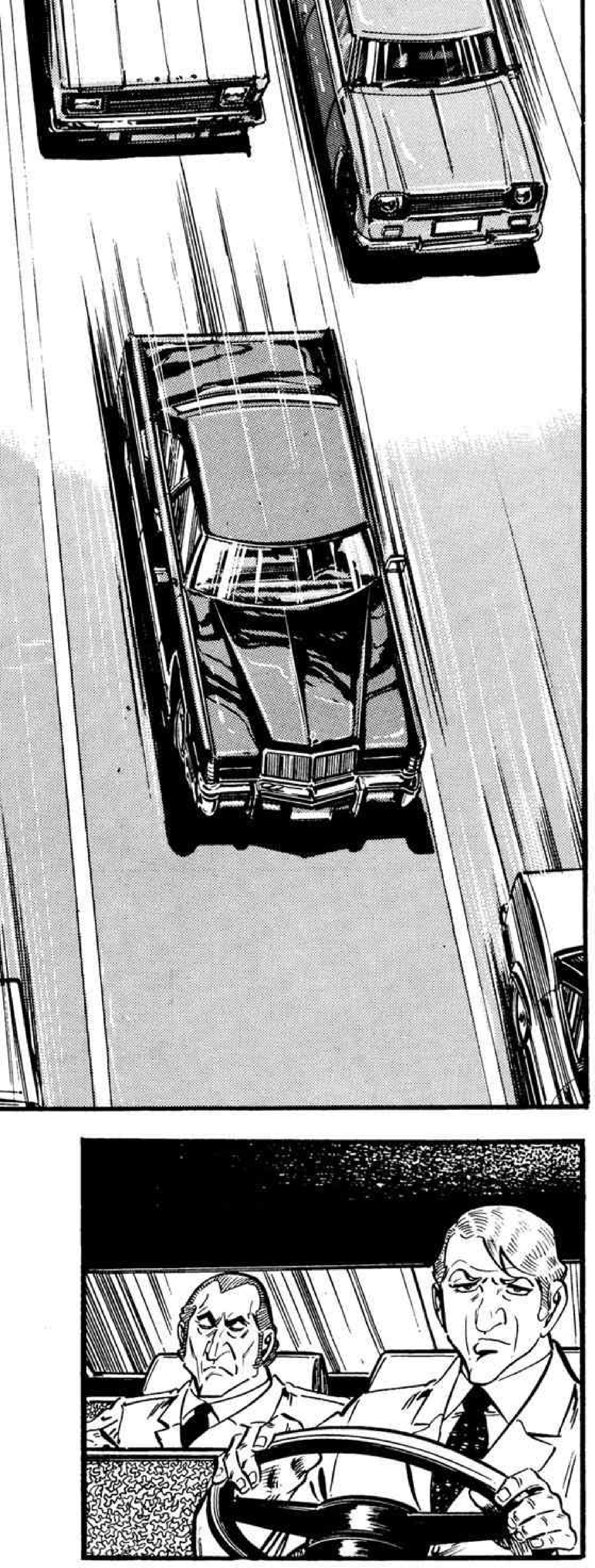

Re-entry is scheduled for Thursday at...

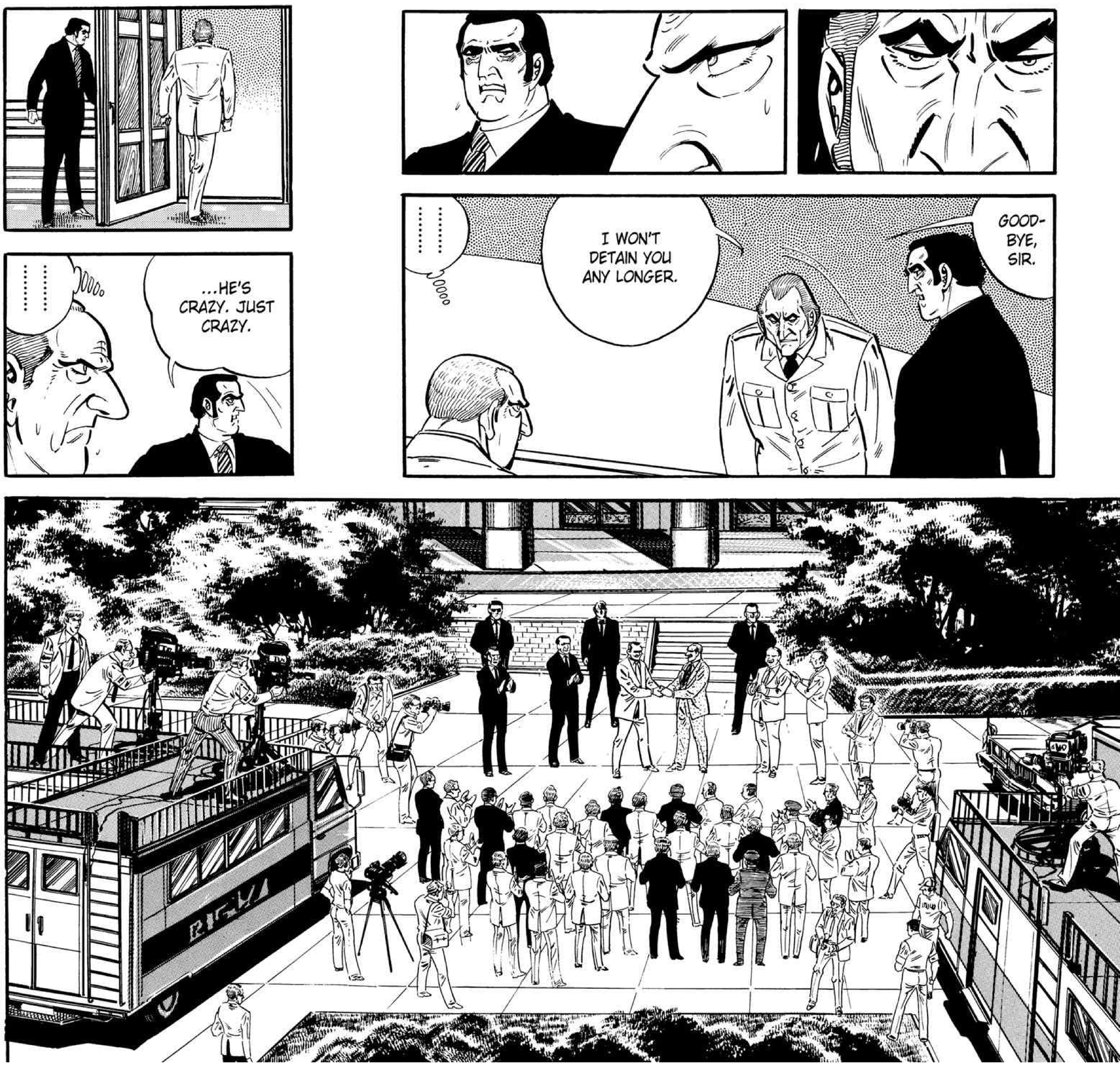

MR. PRESIDENT, YOU'RE MEETING THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER IN 30 MINUTES.
HERE'S THE NOTES.
YEAH... THANKS.
THE MISSION SUCCEEDED, SIR.
"G"'S, YOU MEAN.
YOU KNOW, I *DIDN'T* THINK IT WOULD WORK...HE'S SAVED THIS COUNTRY AND ME A HELL OF A LOT OF EMBARRASSMENT.
WE CAN GIVE HIM CASH, BUT CAN'T GIVE HIM A MEDAL.
NO...NOT WITH THE CAPSULE EMPTY.

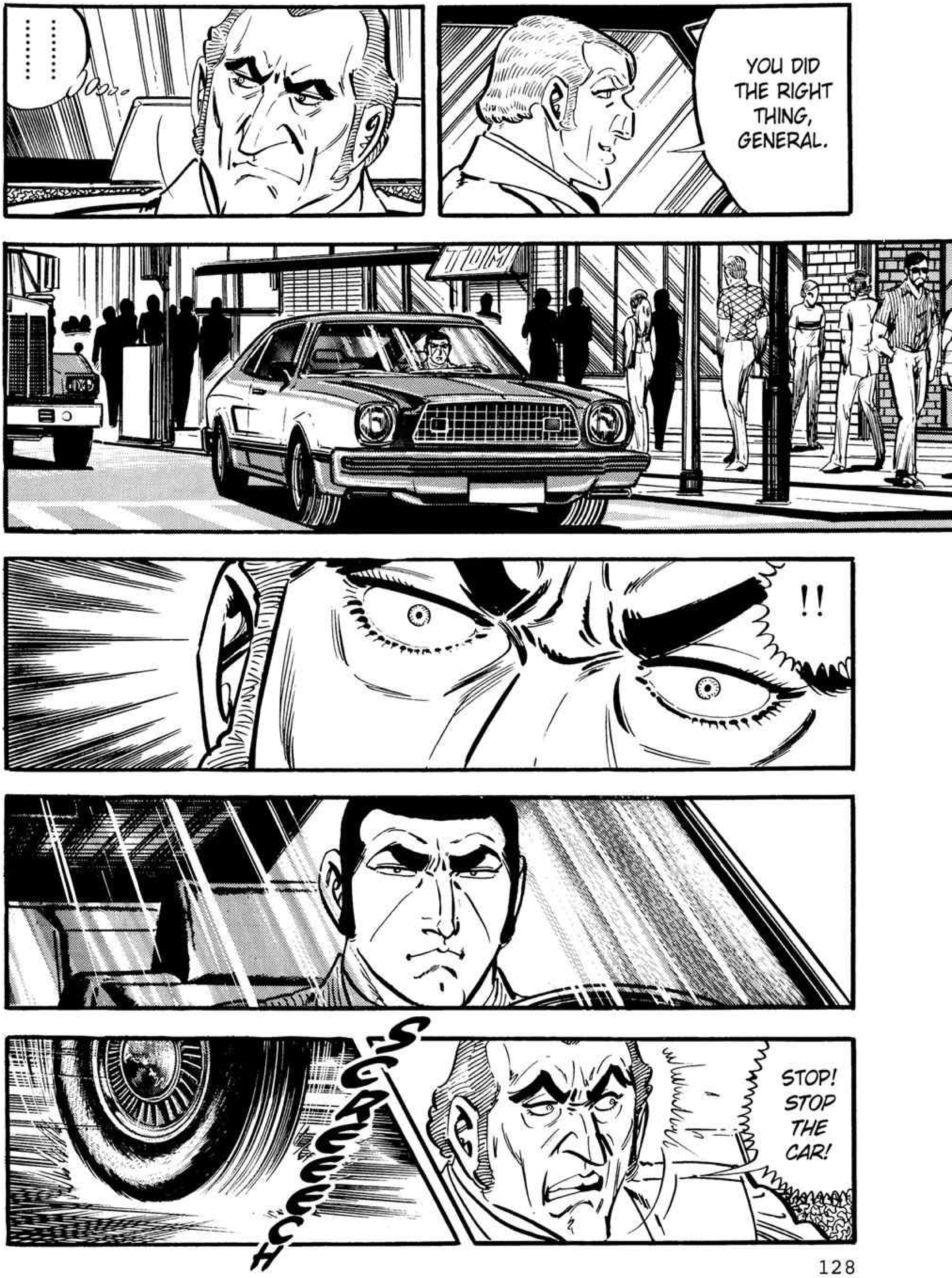

THE RECOVERY TEAM FOUND NO TRACE OF HIM...?
NO, SIR.
HE TOOK MANUAL CONTROL OF THE RE-ENTRY, AND CAME DOWN ABOUT 150 MILES FROM THE RECOVERY ZONE...
WELL, HE DIDN'T SWIM, NOT FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN...HE MUST HAVE MADE HIS OWN ARRANGEMENTS FOR A SHIP TO COME PICK HIM UP...
DID HE MISTRUST US THAT MUCH...?
......
...I HOPE HE'S STILL ALIVE... OTHERWISE, WE'VE BEEN FREED OF KENNEDY'S GHOST...
...BUT WE'LL HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIS.
SIR.. THAT'S NOT FUNNY...
BBBZZZZZZZZ
1 4
2 5
3
MARSH HERE.
Sir, General Ferguson is asking to see the President... I asked him to make an appointment...
...shall I let him in, Sir...?

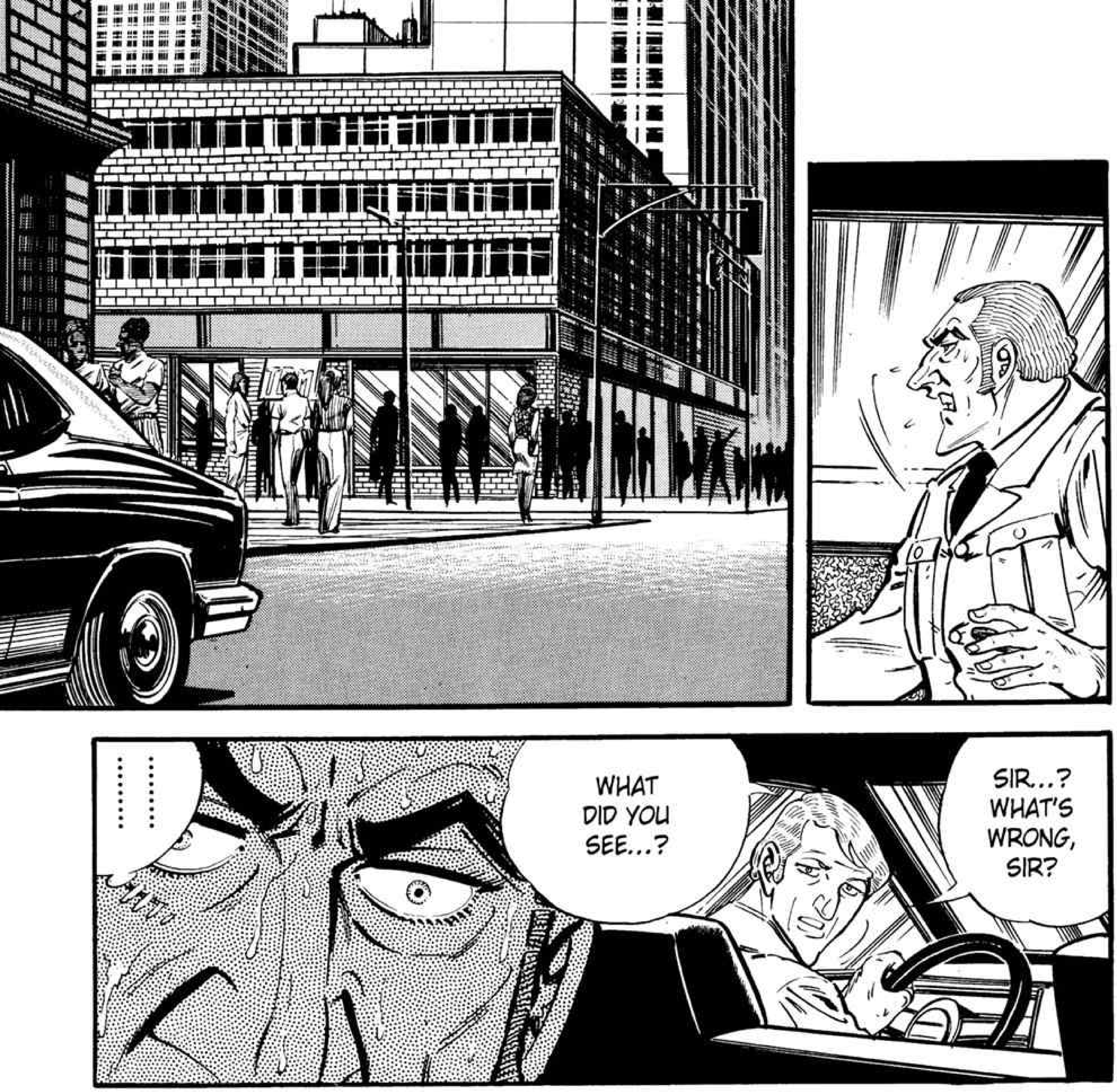
FERGUSON, THE MAN WE HIRED IS MISSING.
YES, SIR.
I CAME HERE TO EXPLAIN THAT.
GENERAL, WE HAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH THE RUSSIANS IN LESS THAN A HALF HOUR... PLEASE MAKE IT BRIEF.
YES, SIR.
MR. PRESIDENT, WE PAID THAT MAN IN ADVANCE AS REQUESTED, PUT OUR STAFF AND SERVICES AT HIS DISPOSAL, AS REQUESTED.
THAT'S RIGHT...
SIR.
AND THAT CRIMINAL CARRIED OUT THE MISSION, AS AGREED.

I FOUND A WAY TO CARRY OUT MY DUTY...
!!
WHAT...WHAT DID YOU DO...? YOU'D BETTER EXPLAIN YOUR--
STAY OUT OF THIS, DAMN YOU.
I'M SPEAKING WITH MY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF!
......
TELL ME WHAT YOU DID. GENERAL.
MR. PRESIDENT, THE EVIDENCE OF THIS SHAMEFUL AFFAIR HAD TO BE ELIMINATED. PURSUANT TO THAT, I HAD HALF THE FUEL REMOVED FROM HIS MANEUVERING UNIT.
IT WAS MY LAST OBLIGATION TO YOU, TO THE AIR FORCE, AND TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
I ASK THAT YOU PLEASE ACCEPT MY RESIGNATION, EFFECTIVE TODAY.
......




......
I WON'T DETAIN YOU ANY LONGER.
GOODBYE, SIR.
......
...HE'S CRAZY. JUST CRAZY.


YOU DID THE RIGHT THING, GENERAL.
......
!!
STOP! STOP THE CAR!
SCREEEECH


SIR...? WHAT'S WRONG, SIR?
WHAT DID YOU SEE...?
......

END

The Orbital Hit
Golgo 13 Story #137, September 1978